

THE DIAL

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LACONICS

BY LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

MR GEORGE MOORE'S recent protest against the use of the word *pensée* by our writers raises a question of more than linguistic interest. Mr Moore has the Society for Pure English, and all the best authorities, with him when he says that the increasing number of unassimilated French words in English is a real danger to our speech. But this danger can hardly be met, as Mr Moore seems to suggest, by an attempt to put a ban upon these words and have them deported as undesirable aliens. Many of them are necessary to us; we cannot get on without them; and it is contrary to the traditions of our language to reject words we need merely because they are of foreign origin. Indeed, just as we have provided the French with a large part of their political vocabulary, so we have received from them a great number of terms connected with the arts and literature. For many centuries it was our wise custom to enrich our language, and increase its powers of expression, by assimilating these borrowed terms. We did not hesitate to give them English shapes and sounds; and by thus incorporating them in our speech we made them current and available.

This process was at first not difficult: French words like *poem*, *prose*, *fiction*, *narration*, *dialogue*, *essay*, *memoir*, *review* found a ready admittance to our vocabulary. Of late years, however, a pedantic and false ideal of correctness has impeded this process and weakened our assimilative powers: many of our more recent borrowings, like *renaissance*, *connoisseur*, *rôle*, *bizarre*, although we use them, are only half at home among us; while others, like *dénouement*, *éclat*, *flair*, still live on as foreigners in our midst.

It would seem that, of all these words from across the Channel, words which, like *pensée*, have an accented *é* in the final syllable are most incapable of throwing off their outlandish garb. That this was not so in former times the Englishing of *levée* into levy, and our adoption of amity, liberty, majesty, refugee, and many other words with this termination, is sufficient proof. But such changes of form, though simple enough in appearance, seem almost beyond our modern powers; *banality* has indeed made a furtive appearance, to meet, however, at once the reprobation of our purists; the indispensable words *naivety* and *employee* have acquired the rights of citizenship; but *matinée*, *soirée*, *protégé*, *fiancé*, *rechauffé*, *repoussé* still keep their foreign shapes. It would be hopeless now to try to naturalize *pensée* as "pensy"; while its old assimilation, "pansy," is limited to the flower with that pretty name.

Some of these indigestible aliens are perhaps not needed, and we may do well, as Mr Moore suggests, to deport them without mercy. Others, however, would seem to have their uses: no acceptable alternative for *fiancé* has been found; and there are good reasons why the word *pensée*, or some more available equivalent for it, would be a useful addition to our vocabulary. The word is in fact a word we need: it describes a way of writing and a special kind of book which we are unable to designate and define by any generally accepted term.

The origin in France, or at least the general currency, of this specialized use of *pensée* would seem to be due to the title given by Pascal's friends to that miscellany of thoughts, maxims, aphorisms, meditations, and little essays which they found after his death among his papers. This designation then came to be applied to other similar collections: to La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes et Réflexions*, to La Bruyère's *Caractères*, to the collected writings of Vauvenargues; and it was used for the title of Joubert's *Pensées* and other volumes of this kind. All such books consist of detached thoughts and observations put together with little or no system or arrangement, each paragraph or sentence being complete in itself—not fused together with what follows or precedes it. Such books are collections of isolated units of composition; the beauty of form they may possess is, as with collections of epigrams or lyrics, in the art with which each separate piece is phrased and elaborated. These units, however, these separate pieces, can be divided—and the authors sometimes so divide them—into three sub-species or

classes of prose composition. First of these is the *pensée* proper—the paragraph or miniature essay, containing the essence of some meditation, appreciation, or observation. Along with these we often find a series of "Characters," brief portrayals of some individual, or of some special type or class or way of living. The flower or perfection of these books, however, consists in the witty or profound aphorisms which adorn their pages. All the writers of *pensées*, La Rochefoucauld, Pascal, La Bruyère, Vauvenargues, Chamfort, Rivarol, and Joubert, have concentrated, now and then, and distilled the essence of their thought into tiny lucid sentences, thus enriching the literature of their country with a great store of maxims and memorable sayings.

Books of this kind, composed of characters and aphorisms and little essays, are by no means lacking in our literature, although we possess no accepted designation for them. Several English writers imitated the characters of Theophrastus long before La Bruyère; and Bacon's Essays, especially in the brief form of their first publication, were fragments, as he himself described them, of his thought; "grains of Salt," as he said in his letter to Prince Henry, "that will rather give you an Appetite than offend you with Satiety." Ben Jonson's Discoveries, with its aphorisms and its little paragraphs, is a true book of *pensées*, and Selden's Table Talk belongs also to this class of literature. Fuller was essentially a writer of Thoughts, and published three volumes of them; and his Holy and Profane State, with its numerous maxims, is really a book of characters and reflections, upon which a loose scheme of arrangement has been somewhat perfunctorily imposed. Sir Thomas Browne is another writer of this kind; his meditations are indeed arranged into chapters in the Urn Burial, but are printed in separate paragraphs in his Religio Medici and his Christian Morals. James Harrington wrote two sets of political aphorisms, but Lord Halifax's Thoughts and Reflexions is our most important and profound collection of this kind. The Sacra Privata and the Maxims of Piety and of Christianity, which were written by Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, and to which Matthew Arnold gave such high praise, are books of maxims and meditations loosely put together. Lord Shaftesbury claimed in his Characteristics the title of a miscellaneous writer, or "Miscellanarian," as he called it; the Characters and Thoughts of Samuel Butler, the author of Hudibras, belongs more properly to this class, in which

we may also include Lord Chesterfield's Characters, and the maxims he wrote for the instruction of his son. Sterne's Sentimental Journey is written in the form of paragraphs and tiny chapters; and lastly, among eighteenth-century books of this kind must be mentioned Shenstone's Essays on Men, Manners and Things, which has been recently reprinted by Mr Havelock Ellis, whose description of Shenstone as a *pensée*-writer called forth Mr George Moore's protest.¹

Several famous authors of the nineteenth century can be described—with apologies to Mr Moore—as *pensée*-writers. Most important among these is Coleridge, who, as Hazlitt said of him, spent his life in the momentary pursuit of truths as if they were butterflies, and found in this pursuit his greatest pleasure as well as the freest exercise of his powers. Coleridge sometimes pinned these captured butterflies together in essays and formless volumes; but it is in the various collections which we possess of his disconnected thoughts and occasional reflections, his Table Talk, his Omniana, his Miscellanies, and, above all, perhaps in those extracts from his notebooks, published under the title of Anima Poetae, that we come in closest contact with his mind. Hazlitt was himself an occasional writer, an indefatigable pursuer of the butterflies and dusky moths of thought. His inspiration came to him in intermittent waves; he lacked, as his Life of Napoleon shows, the sustained concentration necessary for writing with success a book of any length. Hazlitt published several collections of detached thoughts and observations, and in his longer essays we find many passages which stand, as it were, by themselves, and could be transferred—as indeed he sometimes transferred them—to essays on other subjects. This self-sufficiency of a thought, this independence of its context, is, Joubert said, the test and distinguishing mark of the *pensée*; those *pensées* alone were perfect, he declared, which could be detached from their context and placed almost anywhere at will. Our last important writer of this kind is Samuel Butler the author of Erewhon, who, like Samuel Butler the author of Hudibras, left behind him a large collection of disconnected thoughts and observations; and it is in his Notebooks rather than his works of more regular composition that his admirers find his most original and most important work.

It will be seen, therefore, that this "miscellaneous" way of writ-

¹ William Shenstone, by Havelock Ellis, THE DIAL, May, 1927.

ing has been practised, and practised with much success, by many English authors. Various titles have been given to English volumes of this kind; they have been called Thoughts and Reflections, Meditations, Miscellanies, Characteristics, Maxims, Aphorisms; but as generic names all these are open to objection. The words "maxim" and "aphorism" are too exclusive to describe the little essay, or the Character; while "thought" and "miscellany" would include too much. "Reflection" is perhaps our best translation of *pensée*; but the word, owing perhaps to Coleridge's Aids to Reflection, has acquired a somewhat didactic and drab colour; we should demoralize so respectable a word by associating it with the worldly maxims of Bacon and Chesterfield, or the sharp and cynical sayings of Halifax and Hazlitt.

If, however, we cannot assimilate a foreign term, cannot literally translate it, a third course is still open to us: in the German fashion, we may find at home, or even create, some available equivalent; and there happens to be an adjective in our vocabulary, the adjective "laconic," which Addison used as a substantive, and possibly in "Laconics," if only we could accustom ourselves to it—and new words, though rough and hard at first, are soon polished and made smooth by usage—we could find, as Mr Birrell has suggested, the designation we need for this way of writing—this brief, disconnected notation of impressions, thoughts, and observations.¹

Goethe was accustomed to warn poets against the great work, the elaborately constructed poem, which, allowing nothing else to thrive in its neighbourhood, tended to repel the thoughts and feelings of almost daily occurrence—thoughts and feelings which, if seized in their freshness, would be sure to prove, he said, of interest and value. This sage advice is not without its relevance to a certain class of prose-writers, who are subject to occasional inspirations, but do not possess the gift of sustained and formal composition. Such writers, in undertaking a great work beyond their powers, will either suppress the impressions of the moment; or else, as often happens, they will attempt to incorporate them into the larger scheme, often weakening and distorting them in the process. We may perhaps find in Emerson's writings an instance of this kind of deformation, this imposition of an arbitrary form upon material unsuited for it. Emerson was by nature a writer of *pensées* and

¹ The word was used in this sense as the title of an anonymous book of maxims and reflections called *Laconics* and published in 1701.

aphorisms, "laconics," as we have ventured to call them; the basis of his work, as with all such writers, was the notebook in which he jotted down in brief paragraphs his thoughts and intuitions—the deposit, drop by drop and day by day, of the lifelong soliloquy of his mind. When he came to compose these formal essays and addresses which were the only means he found practicable for presenting his thought to the public, he would select some title of large indefinite meaning—Fate, Experience, Compensation, Circles—and then turn to his journal for more or less relevant thoughts and phrases. As long as he could group these passages about some vague general theme he judged their order sufficient, and took no more trouble about it. "Expect nothing," he wrote to Carlyle, "of my powers of composition"; his sentences, he said, could not be expected to cohere together—each was an infinitely repellent particle. This method, or rather no-method, of composition makes his essays seem like collections of fragments tied together, as Carlyle said of them, in canvas bags; and it was the patchwork character of his work which made Matthew Arnold—though he considered Emerson's writing the most important work in English prose of the nineteenth century—deny him, nevertheless, the name of a great prose writer. It is indeed in the ten volumes of Emerson's Journals (from which a selection, *The Heart of Emerson's Journals*, edited by Bliss Perry,¹ has recently been printed) that we come into most unimpeded contact with Emerson's original and imaginative mind, can watch it flashing to its profound conclusions, and can drink most freshly from that ever-bubbling fountain of lucid thought.

The soliloquy of a profound and original mind, its intuitions, its flashes of thought, briefly and candidly noted down as they occur, without design or ulterior purpose, has often proved of greater value than many more ordered compositions; and it is in this form that we possess one of the greatest of the world's great books. Although Pascal no doubt intended to impose a more definite shape upon his disconnected *pensées*, French critics do not regret that we possess them in all their amazing freshness and spontaneity, rather than digested into a formal volume of Christian apologetics. In works of this kind, as Sir Edmund Gosse has truly said in his beautiful book on three other French moralists, we do not look to find a system; and indeed this unsystematic way of writing has proved irresistibly attractive to many of the world's finest spirits. It was

¹ Reviewed in *THE DIAL*, February, 1927.

thus that Leonardo da Vinci noted down his thoughts on art and science, and Joubert his subtle and profound literary appreciations; the writings of Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Thomas-à-Kempis, and most of the great French moralists are all collections of more or less disconnected thoughts.

These books have an enduring value; their authors, as Matthew Arnold said of Joubert, exercise an immortal function and inspire an eternal interest. There are indeed special reasons why this fragmentary way of composition, chaotic as it seems, has proved an advantage, rather than a drawback, to moral writers and observers of mankind. Experience is always seeking for appropriate literary forms in which its various aspects can find their most adequate expression; and there are many of these aspects which can be best rendered in a fragmentary fashion, because they are themselves fragments of experience, gleams and flashes of light, rather than the steady glow of a larger illumination. The intuitions and impressions which we derive from life form a kind of knowledge "in growth," as Bacon described it; an over-early and peremptory attempt to digest this knowledge into a system tends, as he said, to falsify and distort it. Collections of disconnected but sincerely observed truths about human nature never lose their value, while the ambitious schemes which are built upon them soon collapse and are forgotten. "Life," as Dr Johnson said, "is not the object of science; we see a little, very little"; and the great psychological investigation of himself, which is man's most fascinating as well as his most important pursuit upon this planet, is still in that stage where its observations are empirical and scattered. These observations still find their most unhampered expression in disconnected paragraphs and phrases, and perhaps they will always do so. "I fancy," Dr Johnson once remarked, "mankind may come, in time, to write all aphoristically, except in narrative; grow weary of preparation, and connexion, and illustration, and all those arts by which a big book is made."

This notation of what Johnson elsewhere called "independent and disconnected sentiments" remains, as we have seen, a way of writing for which we possess no accepted name. For the critics and writers of any country it is, however, a matter of no small importance to possess precise designations for the different forms of literary composition practised among them. Critics are enabled by means of such convenient tools of thought to classify these forms;

and writers who are endowed with the gift for one or another of them can derive encouragement and correction from the study of their models. Many of our writers have possessed the gift for this brief, laconic, aphoristic way of writing which the French call the *pensée*; but their gifts have sometimes been impeded or misdirected by the lack of a definite name for this mode of expression—a name which would help them to explore its possibilities, isolate its achievements, and appreciate their interest and importance. While therefore we must agree with Mr Moore that the word *pensée* is a most unsatisfactory addition to our vocabulary, we can hardly afford to deport this new importation until we find, to take its place, some more effective appellation of our own—or at least some less outlandish makeshift.

SAINT SENAN'S WELL

BY THOMAS McGREEVY

I make a response to lips I would kiss once
And wonder where tangents finish.
The sunlit discs are small,
The end of a tangent is very far away—

I began my rounds with the sorrowful mysteries
Instead of the joyful,
Ready, therefore, all ready already
For the without of glory.

SILENCES

BY ANDRA DIEFENTHALER

OSCAR HESS visited his neighbour, Rudolph Ort, Annie's father, an old man in bed. "To-morrow mornings, send for Pastor Finck, so you be married. I want to see that. Then I can rest. With my Annie it have to be all right before I go."

The old man paused for strength. When he began again he said, "You take down the line-fence. All as I have, is for you now, and for Annie. The land is all right, only she lays full from weeds. You can see for yourself. Three years I can't work it. But from cattle, I have some good ones. My Annie is crazy for the livestock. She have luck from raising little pigs, but she stands too long to watch how they play. And from calves, she helps you fine. The brindle have always first-class heifers. And she is the best from butter cows in this part the country. She is Annie's, the brindle is. Since from a baby she brought her up.

"First with her, comes me, then comes the brindle. You have to keep that brindle, Oscar, so long she lives."

"Yah, sure, Mr Ort."

Oscar was much pleased with the turn of his fortune. He had long hungered for Annie, wanting to crush her spirit and bend her to his will. Had he not tried to in their play as children, and up through their growing years without success? Now would he have her wholly in his power and eagerly he welcomed the battle. Like a vessel of crockery, he would break her.

But would Annie consent to the marriage? he wondered. Perhaps—to please her father.

There was that Franz Lubke. Could it be she wanted him? They were sometimes at the village dances, inordinately happy together, as it seemed to Oscar's jealous eyes.

It was well that old Ort would call Pastor Finck next day. Nothing must get in the way of it.

The sick man was talking again.

"There's money in my big mountain, Old Buck Mountain. Maybe you could make a road up the east side and quarry the stone out. For the new state roads, they need plenty stone now. The

side from the river, never you can work that, so straight up like a wall, and when you walk on top, better you look out. Easy you can fall over and break your neck. Once I have to shut my eyes when an old sheep slides off. The dog, he chased her. So far down is the river, never I hear one noise when she comes to the water."

A tall, rugged, awkward girl with very light hair had come into the room. Her eyes were grey and wide apart; far-seeing eyes.

"Annie, you are here just right. We talk about you. I want you should marry Oscar because I must go from this world soon. You live right home then in Oscar's house where is only stone wall between. That comes away, so all the land is together. You will take him when I ask you?"

Annie was silent.

"He have nobody and you have nobody. Always you mind your old father, and now you give me my last wish?"

The girl, somehow, by her palpable silence had made it known that she would accept this marriage so ruthlessly thrust on her.

Her heavy shoes sounded on the bare floor of the house. She was going out.

Dusk had sifted down over the house and barns. It was October. Cattle lowed at the pasture gate.

Annie went into the cow-shed and carried straw over her head like a big umbrella. She put it down into the stalls for bedding, with thought of the wooden tines on the fork her father had made. He would not make another fork—soon he would be gone. In her heart there was tenderness for her old father. Between them there had always been friendship.

When she had done with the straw, she carried bundles of cornstalks to the mangers. Then she opened the stanchions and let the cows in from the gate below the yard. They lumbered with heavy udders hitting from side to side against their legs. They were hungry and wanting to be milked, ten in all, old and young.

The warm breath of cattle and the clean odour of straw moved Annie's brain to understand the meaning of talk she had heard in the house. Deep in the brotherhood of dumb beasts! Courage possessed her. She would face the inevitable.

Night had come on. A lantern must be lighted before she could milk. She began with the brindle. The impact of milk streams

upon the bottom of the tin pail, clasped between her knees, made a singing sound. She saw the milk lift gradually and fill the pail, but had no eyes for it, nor for the slanted stream that cut and shattered the foam. The face of Oscar Hess had come before her. She went from cow to cow, milking and seeing him smile. When the work was finished she tossed the milk stool into a corner with a thud. The stool was Oscar.

Later the old man heard her placing the milk pans on shelves in the cellar. He heard her straining the milk into them. Then he heard her heavily walking up the stairs into the kitchen.

"Annie," he called.

The shepherd dog followed her into the bedroom, and slipped his head under her hand. She worked her fingers through his long black hair. In his bushy tail burdock burrs clung in a tight mass. Annie noticed that his right eye was growing whiter with blindness. One day he too would be gone. All would go. . . .

The old man spoke: "Oscar wants to come out to the barn before he went home, but I told him he have to let you think how you want to, now. To-morrow everything is all right. To you, I think he will be good. He works hard. Some day he have something. His father was like that—saving. For the mother, I used to feel sorry. She was awful afraid from him. He could be too hard on her. Mean he was, that man. But of Oscar, I see nothings wrong. I know who is not right to my Annie have to look out, that's all.

"You are willings I should send for Pastor Finck to-morrow? He could bring his wife for witness."

"Yes, he can come. I will take Oscar, but I don't want you should die."

Emotion shook the clumsy girl. She laboured to conceal it.

"That's all fine now, Annie. We don't feel bad. You get me my supper. And the lamp, she waits for oil; almost the wick don't touch."

On the wall a huge beast stood with its head low. It was the shadow cast by the old man's knees and the extra quilt heaped on the foot of the bed. The shadow came down off the wall and followed Annie out of the room.

In the kitchen she held an oil-can above the glass lamp. The oil gurgled slowly into the blue bowl. As if out of a mist, there

arose a yellow-painted house beside the Delaware river. It was Franz Lubke's house. Franz had tried to kiss her one pleasant day when she had carried mail to the post-office. "Next time I will," he threatened. When he saw Annie again he merely said, "You like better maybe that Oscar Hess should walk home with you."

Annie was, as always, silent.

Four years had come and gone.

Now the lamp was running over with oil. Annie mopped it up and screwed back the burner upon the neck of the blue glass bowl. Between thumb and finger she rubbed brittle char from the wick, and lighted it. Carefully she replaced the brightened chimney between the brass clamps that received it with a ringing sound.

No use to think of Franz Lubke now. It was too late. And, but a day or two ago she had heard her father say that very little was to be made out of the butcher business. What could it matter? Franz had said no word to her of marriage. With her father it was a law that a man must get along. He had often spoken with favour of the thrift and ambition of Oscar Hess. Might it be that they had planned together for some time? But to her like the swiftness of lightning the whole thing had come to pass. Her father had asked her and she had not refused. Let it go that way. Since she could remember he had known her to be loving—obedient. It would not be different now, now when he lay dying.

She carried the lamp back into the bedroom. The gleaming light found its way to the old man's face. He was smiling there on the high, wide bed.

In December the body of Rudolph Ort was carried to the Lutheran Churchyard in the village of Crow Valley.

Now winter had all but gone, and April had come, dismal April. The land lay soaked in old snow, dingy with the wear of many months. Over all was a sullen mood.

Near the wood-shed Annie knelt beside a chestnut log. Oscar knelt on the other side of it. Between them there was a cross-cut saw.

"Hold up your end there," Oscar shouted. "Pull on the saw. When you think we get through this log? That corner's waiting long enough for a new leg. The other three are almost gone. We saw four while we are at it."

"I can't. I feel sick," Annie told him.

"Sick! What kind of talk is that from an ox like you? Maybe you think I pay out money to hire a man to do the work now? Don't try to play me tricks. I suppose you want to go in the house and sew on baby clothes. My mother, she sewed at night when the work was done. We don't begin wrong. I tell you that from the first, so you know. Sick!"

The saw rested midway in the log. Annie had let go of the handle at her end.

"Why you don't say something?"

"Yes, I say something, Oscar Hess. Your mother was 'fraid from your father, and you try to make me 'fraid like that. Since we are married you try always something so it should hurt me. You think I don't notice that, or maybe you think it hurts me more as it does."

Oscar interrupted her. "You wanted your father should make me marry you. And he asks me to take you so *he* should be satisfied. Ain't it? Maybe I should be meaner yet, and get me a club. You want I should be a fool—a hell of a fool."

Annie arose from the log and brushed the saw-dust from her black apron. Oscar at the same moment got to his feet and struck her. It was as if he had hit a tree. Silently, slowly she walked toward the house. Oscar laughed. It was the best he could do, with his fear of her.

When he came for his dinner Annie stood at the stove stirring a thick soup of beans boiled with pork and onions.

Oscar drew a chair to the table and put it down with a force that threatened to make kindling of it.

"Sick!" he sneered.

Annie filled a bowl with soup and placed it before him. Then she went to the window where she finished salting the freshly churned butter.

"You don't talk yet, henh? Maybe I make mistake about that ox. You are more as three quarters mule, I guess. When I go down to Crow Valley to-night I have to ask that old nigger teamster for Kramer's Mill, how it is he handles mules."

Oscar drove to Crow Valley that night, not to see the mule-driver, but to bring the doctor back, for Annie and her child.

That spring Oscar kept to his fields, ploughing. He had a new hindrance now, Annie's devotion to the baby. Jealousy possessed

him. With the child, he had thought a bond of love would come, but he saw now, only absolute isolation.

Annie became more of a oneness than ever with the soil and farm creatures. She was with the blood of animals, the heart of seeds, the roots of trees. They were of one flesh together. Annie walked in strength, alone with the child. Of this new intensity Oscar had fear. It confused him. He laughed. If only he could reach through her resistance and break that high freedom!

The boy grew and followed his mother over the farm and through the barns, tending the cattle and the brindle's yearly calves. When he was old enough, the brindle was put into his care.

"Always the brindle! Always the boy!" Oscar said to Annie in an unguarded moment.

Passionately he wanted this woman who would not talk; who would have none of him.

The day had come and gone on which Oscar had sold the brindle to the butcher. Annie's words, "If you could be dead, I would like that," were eating into him. They kept beating at his mind. He walked, dragging his feet. Only when he drank he felt his manhood, and boasted that no woman was iron enough for him.

Pretending that Annie's silence and indifference were of small consequence he worked long days in the field, until exhaustion overtook him. He was overwhelmed with unhope.

Then came the morning he heard Franz Lubke talking with Annie in the kitchen.

"My boy tells me what nice Easter eggs your boy brings to school; some from red, boiled with onion skins, and some from yellow out of the tea-pot," said the butcher.

"You don't come here to tell me that. No;" Annie replied.

"No, I don't. Your boy says to mine how you feel so bad about the brindle. I am sorry. Oscar don't tell me the brindle was your cow. Never I would take her when I know that. Annie, what I *can* do, I *will* do. You let me know."

Annie put up her broom and looked gratefully at the butcher as his long, muscular fingers fumbled at his hat. He was uncomfortable. His hands gave Annie the sharp sense of him. Then something warm; something swift passed between them. Both

were sensitive to it. Annie sank into a chair, and the butcher got up to go.

His towering form filled the doorway as Oscar came from the barn. Oscar's figure below the sill suggested a fat palpitating bull-frog.

He looked into Annie's face. It was blank.

"You paid me for that cow, didn't you?" he said in an ugly tone to the butcher. Fires flashed in his small black eyes.

"Yes," answered Franz Lubke, "full price."

"Well, then, that's the end of it."

Oscar walked away, in the direction of the barn.

When the butcher had gone, he came back and said to Annie, "I want you should keep Franz Lubke out of here. Maybe you think I don't know in you is something men run after. He lost his woman last summer, now he is right away after another one. And the brindle he talks about!" Oscar laughed.

Let seasons pass. Jealousy for Lubke, for the ten-year-old boy, Carl, and hate for himself filled the long hours of his day. He sought to forget Annie. Night after night he stumbled home drunk and slept in the barn. There in his fancy Annie lay with him, near and breathing. The depths of the hay were her bed in the house, where he dared not put his body down. She was silent, always silent.

Draughts crept through the hay and he drew the woman closer. Now he was master and she was yielding and sweet.

He had but got her when he must let her go, for horses pounded in the stable below; dawn had come. He could see a star fading through the loft window. What was a star? What was Annie?

The rainy Sunday afternoon that Oscar climbed Old Buck Mountain, he slipped on wet moss, and clung to saplings to keep his foothold, for the way was steep.

"I don't break her down, no, I don't break her down. She breaks *me* down. Look how I am! What I can think of myself, anyhow, no more as nothing!"

With much struggle he achieved the top. Looking down the side of the rocky precipice into the silver-black river, he thought of the old sheep Annie's father had seen tumbling into space. Bare blue

rocks juttet out. Perhaps the sheep had hit them and become unconscious. He wondered, and remembered the old man's words. "Easy you can fall over and break your neck."

No, it would not be easy. His courage was going.

He sank at the foot of an old scrub pine away from the edge.

"She wants me dead long enough, now; well, she gets her wish all right. And when I am gone, nobody will know she is glad. She's smart—she says nothing, that woman from iron. In her is something else yet, something from sweet, but not for me, not for me, that sweet. Never for me."

He looked through the rain at a sprawling bush that clung to the rim. A humming-bird's nest, a tiny thing swayed on a twig in the light wind.

He would wait a while.

When he had emptied the flask of whiskey he flung it out over the rim and listened for splinters on the rocks, or for splash of it in the river. There was only silence, silence—as if Annie's silence had followed him and was in league with the silence of rocks and mountain-top. By his death he could break it. That would be a way to reach her!—regret!—punishment! A pleasant thought.

Slowly he slid from his position against the pine-tree until he lay flat on the rock floor of the mountain-top. He reached for his hat and covered his face. The rain was no good beating down like that. Gradually sleep came on him. He twitched. Then leaping to his feet he thrust forth a threatening fist.

"Take that . . ."

He stood, swaying.

"You think I got 'fraid from a butcher? You like to see blood run? Yah, sure, you see it every day. Look by your face. I see how I fix you, all right."

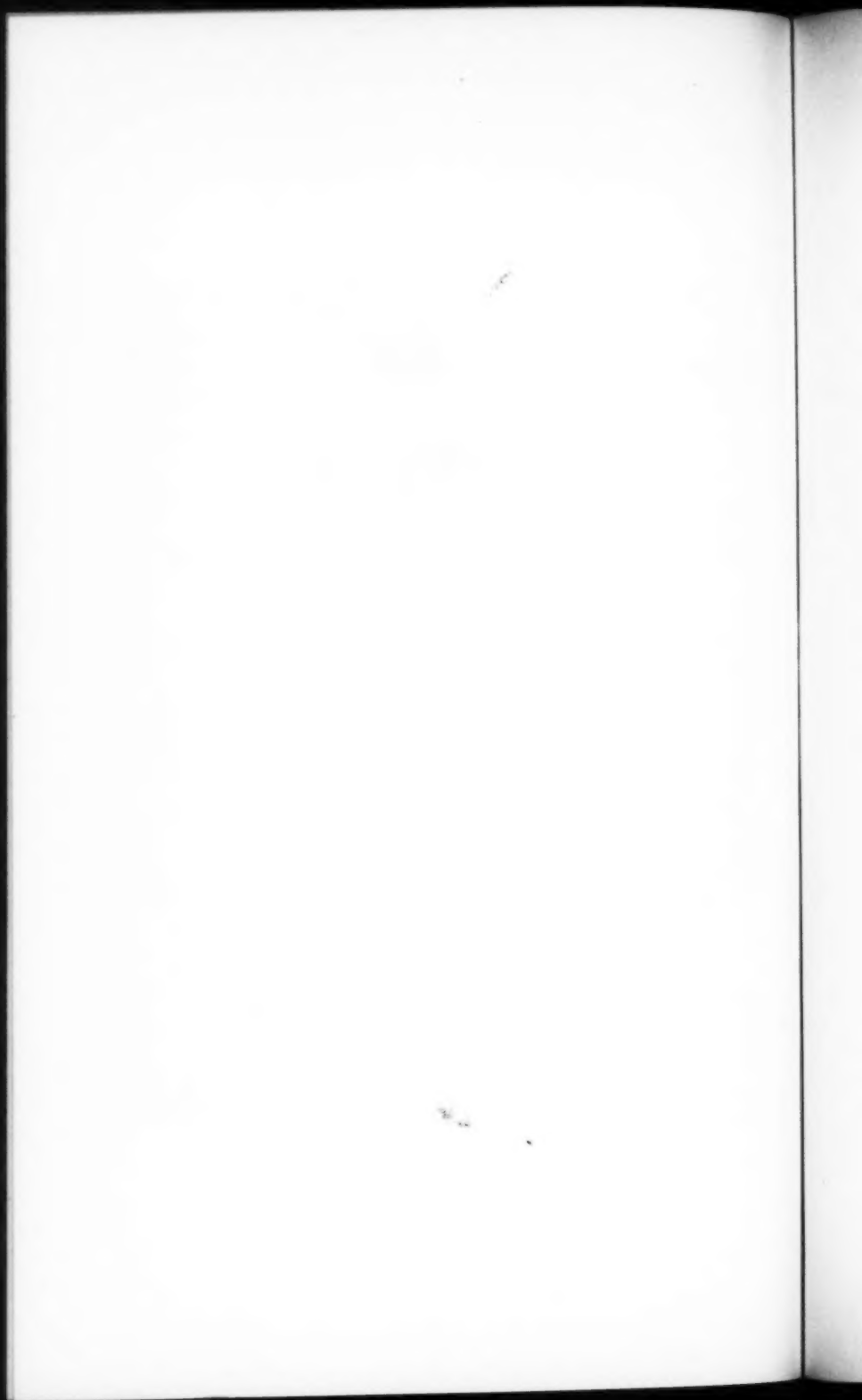
He moved aside and backward. It was the butcher's turn now. Oscar stepped back, working nearer and nearer the sharp line that marked earth from space. Too near.

There was no sound but the beat of rain. It would fill the hat that lay by the stunted pine. The hat would dry, and winds would send it down into the river. Nothing remains on Old Buck's top but the scrub pine; a deep crevice in the hard rock grips it there.



Courtesy of Paul Rosenberg, Paris

LES CYPRES. BY VINCENT VAN GOGH



SEVEN POEMS

BY W. W. E. ROSS

Music for our ears
 our ears

Seldom is it that one hears
Fit music for our ears.

 Music
changes from day to day;
it will take our souls away;
music runs on from day to day,
music makes the mourner mourn.

 Music
played mournfully today
tomorrow shall make gay.

Music changes day by day;
music shall take our souls away.

Fairy kings
and fairy queens
are no longer
seen on greens.
They are gone,
it would appear,
to some country
far from here;

To some land
where firmly stand
in full leaf
trees of belief
in fairy things.
There fairy kings
and fairy queens
are seen on greens.

SONNET

This water runs so smoothly and the green
Reflected in it so distinctly shows,
It must appear to one at hand he knows
That he, below, another world has seen,
There in the water's heart, where in between
The upper and the low the surface flows
Without a flaw. Above, the summer glows
As we together watch the stream serene.
The day is delightful on this river shore
And in the sunlight everything is near.
The river in silence at our feet has made
Its course, it seems, for ever and an hour;
While Death, in the distance, meaningly may nod
And whisper to us. But we shall not hear.

An iron railway bridge. The view
Extends along the level track,
The ties, stone-ballasted, the two
Lines of steel rail polished, black,

To where around a distant curve
Will soon appear, surprise indeed!
The locomotive's clanging swerve
With careless, tireless speed.

Let me hear the coming train,
See the swift splendour of its gait,
Feel as the first inventor when
He watched his work, erect, elate,

With a divine encouragement,
A feeling of triumphant mind—
The locomotive as it went,
The sluggard smoke, trailing behind;

Or let me seated in a car
Watch the straight poles flicker past,
The dull fields extending far,
The clouds coming not so fast

As the engine, gliding down
 The changing grade, or wheeling past,
 With sustained whistle, each small town
 Into the terminus at last.

IMPRESSION OF NEW YORK

Tall streets
 flamboyancy of size
 and noise
 of a million rivets

Steady roar
 of traffic past the door
 streaming along the avenue
 in full view

Darkness waits
 but not here
 Night is day here.

On Broadway night is day

Air
 of the ocean where
 ships come and go

Below
 the taxis go
 rushing in swarms like young fish

Where
 is rest or quiet? Not there.

Lions elastic
 leaping
 great cats great cats
 Lions
 playfully in sport they play
 elastically

SEVEN POEMS

Who fears a lion today?
 Bullets bullets
 shall drive the lions away.

Lions

great cats sport and play
 They are yellow tawny
 they are yellow in the desert
 they run faster than a bird
 flying
 they run slower than a bullet.

Lions

leaping on the plain
 shall not chase man again
 great cats lions.

Flowers

revolving in the sun
 spinning colours
 whirling
 colours yellow
 red and blue
 and yellow

Flowers spinning in the sun
 make the garden make one
 garden in the sun.

These

upon stalks rotating
 red brick-coloured
 blood-coloured blue
 yellow and pink

Flowers rotating in the sun
 make the garden make one
 garden in the sun.

AN HIDALGO

(The roots of Spain)

BY AZORIN

Translated From the Spanish by Katie Lush

IT is the year 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, or 1522. He lives in Toledo; the unknown author of *El Lazarillo de Tormes* has given us the story of his life. The house is large and spacious; it has a rather dark *zaguán* paved with little round stones; over the street door is a great stone scutcheon; inside the building, on our left after we have passed through a vast hall with a little door at the back of it, we see a light, clean *patizuelo* paved with large tiles between which weeds grow. And in all the house there are no carpets nor chairs nor seats nor chests nor branched candelabras nor pictures nor tables nor curtains. Nor are there—and this is the important thing—any saucepans or stew-pans or frying-pans or dishes or glasses or jars or knives or forks. But the hidalgo lives happily; life is, after all, no more than the idea we have of it. In the great hall, on our right as we enter, there is a stretcher with a rug over it; this is the bed. In the patio, standing in a corner, we see a *cantaro* filled with water; these are his provisions.

A profound silence reigns in the house; the street is narrow and winding. The rhythmic, almost imperceptible humming of the wheels of the cotton-spinners next door is faintly audible—you have seen these charming wheels in Velazquez' picture; every now and then you hear the cadence of a song, perhaps some old ballad like those the Segovian pilgrims sing in *El Donado Hablador*; or, in the afternoon, the clear pealing of bells may shake the air—bells rung in Toledo by Franciscans, or Dominicans, or Mercedarians, or Augustinians, or Capuchins; if it be morning when the bells ring, our hidalgo rises from his couch. It will be six o'clock, half past six, seven. At one end of the wretched bed are the breeches and doublet of the hidalgo; they have served him for a pillow; he puts

them on, takes the coat, shakes and brushes it; then picks up the sword. And before he buckles on his sword-belt, he holds the sword itself in his hands for a moment, gazes at it as he might gaze at one he loves. This sword is all Spain; this sword is the soul of the race; it speaks of integrity, dignity, valour, audacity, silent endurance, pride, contempt for pettiness. Lacking this sword, how, think you, could he live tranquil, happy, content, in a house without chairs, without a table, without pots and pans? He gazes at the sword, and again he gazes; he passes his hand affectionately over the wide guard, brandishes it in the air; and to the boy who serves him, and who is watching all these manoeuvres round-eyed, he says:

"Ah, my boy, if only you could know what thing this is! The gold is not minted that could buy it from me."

With these words, he belts it on to hang at his left side, takes his cape up from the bench on which he had laid it carefully the night before, shakes it well, and proudly wraps himself in it.

"Lázaro!" he admonishes the boy, "take good care of the house; I am going to Mass."

And he goes out into the street, walking slowly, holding his head high, but wholly without insolence in his manner; one end of the cape is thrown over his shoulder, his left hand has sought the pommel of his sword and answers lovingly to the feel of it; the contact intensely, intimately satisfies him. The dull bang of the door echoes through the street; his neighbours, the spinners, have left their wheels for a moment to come out on to the balcony.

"Look, how fine he is!" says one.

"You can still see there traces of the fine gentleman," chimes in a second.

"He's an aristocrat, all right," comments a third.

And all these dainty, gay Toledans, whose vivacity Brantôme was extolling about that time in his *Vies des Dames Galantes*, laugh rather lightly perhaps, rather irreverently, at the proud, dignified, good hidalgo who walks slowly, majestically, step by step, away into the distance. Don't you think this thoughtless, gay laughter rings symbolic? Don't these spinners, working at their wheels all day and making fun of their neighbour the hidalgo, an upright, dreaming, valiant man, but a man without

food, do they not bring home to you the painful contrast that will endure while the world endures, between the real and the ideal, between prosaic work, without which there can be no life, and an ideal, without which as little can there be life?

But the bells of the Franciscans, of the Augustinians, of the Dominicans, of the Mercedarians, of the Capuchins, of the Trinitarians, are calling to Mass. Our hidalgo enters one of those little silent white Toledan churches; at the back through the open spaces in the screen you may see the white or black shadows of nuns coming and going. Mass being over, what could be pleasanter than a walk through the outlying parts of the town? It is a clear, warm, radiant, autumn day; the trees are beginning to change colour and the leaves to fall, fluttering, blowing, whirling noisily about in the wind. Against the brilliant blue sky the city's domes, towers, golden walls, blackened walls, high *miradors* and pillars stand in strong relief; in the distance opposite us, on the other side of the deep ravine in which the Tagus flows, is a panorama of wide-spread orchard land, parched, sober, intense—dull blue, faded ochre, dark green—El Greco's colours. In this peaceful morning hour these old nobles, Don Rodrigo, Don Lope, Don Gonzalo, may come out of the city and walk among the verdant gardens; they are carried out in litters and then walk for a while, bent, stumbling, burdened with the weight of their glorious campaigns at the side of Doña Isabel and Don Fernando; or those gallants with wide, pleated ruffs, who dream of an expedition to Italy or Flanders and write love-letters quoting Catullus and Ovid; or those charming young girls, hidden under voluminous cloaks, who in their all-enveloping black only allow a white hand to be seen, soft, satiny, long, tapering, ornamented perhaps with a ring of gold filigree work made by Alonso Nuñez, Juan de Medina, Pedro Díez, fine gold-workers of Toledo; or those septuagenarian or octogenarian duennas with their big slippers, wide bonnets, with perhaps a suspicion of a moustache, who go from house to house with lace and jewellery, who know the curative virtues of herbs and may even be able to supply you with the tooth of a hanged man, or rope from the gallows. . . . Our hidalgo walks in the midst of all this press of lovers and beloved. You have seen, have you not, in one of Velazquez' pictures—The Fountain of the Tritons—the deport-

ment of a gallant bowing to a lady? This supreme, deferential yet proud gesture, sober, without any offensive extremeness, without the French savour of affectation, discreet, elegant, light as air, this unique gesture belongs alone to Spain, this gesture, this slight inclination, is the complete, ancient, legendary courtesy of Spain, this gesture is Girón, Infantado, Lerma, Uceda, Alba, Villemediana; this gesture our hidalgo makes before some veiled ladies who are walking among the trees. Then he converses with them, talks discreetly, laughs, smiles, tells of his adventures. Perhaps these ladies, chatting in this way, insinuate—you know how—a wish for some refreshment, or a cool drink; then our friend, ill at ease for a moment, alleges a matter of urgent business that cannot be postponed, and bids them farewell; they smile into their cloaks; he walks off slowly with gallant bearing, his hand clenched on the handle of his sword. The morning is passing; twelve grave long strokes have sounded from the Cathedral; he must go home. At this hour, in every dining-room in the city, tables are being spread with white linen or damask cloths; our hidalgo returns to his mansion. At this point a painful scene is to be enacted. Have you yourself, at some time when you were worried and upset, paced a room in your house, silent, abstracted, unaware of your surroundings? You are not angry; not indignant; no reproach, no complaint is uttered by you; the anxiety you feel is something quite intimate and personal, a phase of your destiny you find it difficult to acquiesce in. . . . So our hidalgo paces the rooms and corridors of his house. While he is thus occupied, someone knocks at the door; it is Lázaro. If his brows had been knit before, his countenance is now serene.

"Lázaro, why didn't you come in to dinner?" he enquires with a smile; "I waited but you didn't come; so I dined alone."

Lázaro has not had his dinner; but he has brought in some broken bread and a calf's foot begged in the city; this he admits.

"Lázaro," the hidalgo says, "I do not wish you to beg; people might think that you were begging for me. . . ."

But Lázaro sits down on the bench and begins to eat. The hidalgo continues to pace up and down watching him.

"You're dining well, Lázaro," he comments. "Is that a calf's foot?"

"Calf's foot it is, *señor*," Lázaro replies.

"I confess there's nothing I like better," the good hidalgo observes.

Then Lázaro, who knows well that his master is fasting, offers him a piece. The hidalgo hesitates; but finally—forgive this derogation of his pride—finally, he eats. What, in that moment of hesitation, passed in this brave man's mind?

In the afternoon he walks again through the streets of Toledo; he chats for a moment with some friends—though he always says he has no friends, another of the traits that attach us to the man—or perhaps from the *acantilado* he watches the flowing of the soft red waters of the river. Then the convent bells ring again. Will our friend go to a Novena, or a Benediction, or a sermon? When he gets back, he says to Lázaro:

"Lázaro, it is too late to-night to go out for provisions; to-morrow will be plenty of time to replenish the larder."

Then he takes off his cape, shakes it well, folds it carefully, and lays it on the bench, undresses, and gets into bed.

This was in 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, or 1522. In this same century a woman, a great discerner of souls—Teresa de Jesús—wrote these words in her book, *The Foundations*: "There are persons of honour who, though dying of starvation, desire the more urgently that no stranger should pity them."

This is Spanish greatness; simplicity, fortitude, capacity to suffer long in silence beneath a serene exterior; national attributes of ours that seem to be vanishing.

THERE IS A VASTNESS

BY MABEL SIMPSON

There is a vastness in a death,
A dignity of space,
Untroubled even by a breath
The proud imperial face

Discloses nothing, and the breast
Where changes will occur
Goes down into the dust to rest
With no interpreter.

NOT DEATH

BY CHI-CHEN WANG

It is the wailing that chills me,
Not the wind.

It is its shadow that haunts me,
Not Death.



NEW YORK. BY A. WALKOWITZ

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PHOENIX

BY PHILIPPA POWYS

GLORIOUS was the morning along the western shore. Bright grew the buttercups amid the early grass. Rich and red stretched the cliffs on either side. Blue lay the sea below; while bluer still rose the high vault of heaven above.

Who could forget? My soul forbid it. What had come over me this early summer morning? An awe beyond understanding, a rapture more stirring than sunshine! All remembrances became as naught! Here was the birth of a great joy. It rose with the salted smell of lain seaweed; it brought the music of slow breaking waves. It lingered in the curved lines of the boats, it played with the light of the sun on the water. It gathered with the waves, and it rose with the wings of many sea-birds. I stood and I trembled.

What was the meaning of the joy of my soul? My mind was perplexed beyond understanding. Why was I conscious of a strange wonder, a nervous excitement; while within me arose an exalted happiness?

At the same time my father stood black-coated beside me. He was tall. He looked straight before him, gazing at the sky and at the far horizon. Very still we stood. Presently in a solemn voice he exclaimed: "Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

I caught the echo of his word to my soul, for at that instant far below us I saw the moving figure of my lover.

There where the heat struck the round stones of the beach, there where the fishermen mended their nets, he appeared. There where the birds clamoured and whirled for offal, he came. It was as if he walked not. It seemed that his feet touched not the ground. There as he lingered between the boats and the sea, the sky grew still brighter, the waves played faster, and the gulls mewed and soared above him. The very elements knew that one blessed had come among them.

My father glanced below, and he spoke and he questioned: "Who goes there? A fisherman?"

I made no reply, but in silence my heart shivered. I could only watch. I saw then the beams of the sun strike the sides of boats

with a still stronger light; and with fearful strength it bore down on the ripples of the waves, on the steepness of the cliffs, and on the houses which crowded the valley. Glorified by the blue of sea, it fell over him as he handled the nets with the others upon the shore.

My heart was stirred within me, and I made as if I would go down to him, but lo! the arm of my father out-stretched before me. He stayed me. Then did I feel the rim of tears behind the clear sight of my eyes, even as blackening clouds of thunder approached unnoticed behind the inland hills. Perceiving them my father pointed again, and his long black arm looked more menacing than the gathering storm.

"The Lord have mercy upon us."

Forthwith as he turned aside, a flash with sharp intensity revealed the massed purple of the vapour; while across the grassy inclines came the muttered sound of thunder.

I looked below where the sun still shone upon the shore. Yes, the powerful rays of the solar world were yet aslant upon the boats and upon the fishermen. In the pure nimbus of heaven they were made manifest. My soul rejoiced exceedingly, for where the sea-waves fell, sang the joy of days to come.

Bright evening light; peace and rest.
Borne away in a fishing boat.

Rise and fall; gurgle and ripple.
Hear the sea break against the sides
Rolling fast in from the ocean-fields.
My head on the ballast, I see him watch,
Keenly alive to the lights abeam,
Or trailing the line, he anxiously waits.

Drift and float. Haul hard and pull.
Hands on the long paddle, or pumping at stern.
Heave the net to, and unmesh the fish.
The waters all silver with flickering tails.

* * * [] [] [] []

I dreamed a dream one night; most terrible; so vivid, so real, that it came before me as a vision.

Thus it happened in the midst of my fearful imagination that day-time was turning to later noon and I was clinging to a lonely rock, surrounded by deep waters and torn by great waves. Fast they rose above me, covering me with foaming showers. Like the hissing froth from a monster's mouth they reared to drench me. Cold and cruel they fell upon me. Mightily afraid, I held in terror to the structure of the rocks, so jagged and yet so smooth. The palms of my hands were bleeding, they were more sticky from my own blood than from the saltness of the spray which overspread me. My feet slipped upon the moist weed as they strove in vain to escape the swirling force of the riven sea.

Many clouds over and around me filled the sky; dark and ferocious, racing clouds, wolf-like. . . . They gathered around knowing no mercy, for no mercy they knew. Their wild gusty breath came in panting fury from their bellies, confounding the countenance of the sun until it turned from fire to milk-white, pale as a mid-day moon. When from its sides came forth long arrows of anger, spurring the water to further wrath, hastening the winds to jealousy until they thundered forth in chaos and madness; bringing in their rear the great rains, which fell in sheets upon the billows and upon the sharp sides of the rocks.

Tremendous and terrible was the tumult from which I shrank. Shattered and broken was my soul within me.

All, all was evil; all, all was bent on destruction. What merciless flood-gates had broken? From whom could I receive salvation? To whom could I turn to be saved?

Only to the rock could I cling. Only in the tempest could I lift up my voice. In great trouble I cried aloud, but my call was as that of a piping bird, as that of a grasshopper in rustling corn. There was no one to succour me, no light to give me hope; and no miracle to bring peace to the sea.

But in violence did the waves rise in rapid approach; while colder than ice froze the beams of the departing sun. A darkness worse than night pressed its mad hands towards me; barrenness and death surrounded me.

What was the meaning of this wild desolation? Where was my call in the churning waste of water, in this wind-driven sky?

Of a sudden there came as if a voice from the mass of flying clouds . . . "Let go thy hands, who aught can save thee?" While I raised one, a great ship neared. She heaved towards me through the eternal rush of waters; with sides blacker than the vapours

above, she tossed. I sounded my voice, but there came no answer. Two arms reared upwards, only to be lost with the ship in the troughs and hills of tormented creation.

Thus was I forsaken! Thus had God forgotten me!

Bleeding fast was the blood of my hands, and drenched was the hair of my head; the strength of my legs was even as that of a new born calf.

Who could survive? Who could rally? Better to be thrown among lions; to be hurled from a high steeple; where forgetfulness would be established in death, and peace in unconsciousness.

How long, how much longer before the waves would envelope me, and the howling winds possess me?

To my soul there came no comfort.

Listen! What did I hear beyond the shriek of the wind? What did I hear beyond the pounding of the mighty waves? The voice of the man I loved, or the voice of his mate who lived with him! Only in fancy could it pass with the flying foam, with the long cords of the whipping rain.

No! To my astonishment I heard the call again. How had they seen? How had they heard?

Upon a raging sea they launched off their boat. By the fire of lightning they directed her. Upon the sides of the great waves they steered toward me; in the jeopardy of the gale they held their lives. Only to save me by the whirling of a rope, by the swiftness of an arm to deliver me. Thence I was assured from the ravages of a storm, and from the onslaught of the tempest I was gathered.

In the tossing fleeting craft I at last found safety; in a fishing-boat of wood and tar I regained my soul.

No longer will the roaring winds alarm me,
No longer will the strong waves rear over me.
Though soot-black clouds surround me
And beating hail-stones fall across me,
I trouble not:

I trouble not,
For on a bed of nets I lay me down,
Among pearl-like fish I find repose.
To forget terror in the sound of the rowlock,
To find sleep in the fall of the oars.
He brought his arm forth to protect me,
His wisdom found me out.



MISS MERRIAL HOPE. BY FRANK DOBSON

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A DECLAMATION

BY KENNETH BURKE

I HAD become convinced that, by the exercise of the intelligence, life could be made much simpler and art correspondingly complex; that any intensity in living could be subdued beneath the melancholy of letters. And I tried to realize that we should all be saviours of mankind if we could, and would even slay one another for the privilege. I felt that the man who strove for dignity, nobility, and honour should have his task made as difficult and as hazardous as possible, and that in particular he should be forgiven no lapses in style. The day was long since past when I drew moustaches on the pictures of pretty women, though I still warmed to find that a new generation had arisen to continue the tradition, to carry on the torch which we had handed down to them.

On looking back upon one's life, he may sometimes feel that every moment of it was devoted to discomfiture, marked by either pain or uncertainty. Yet it is possible that by a constant living with torment, we may become immune to it, and that disintegration will fall only upon those whom adversity can overwhelm as a surprise, making little headway against those others, protected by cowardice, who would accept even prosperity with bitterness. For when I have heard much talk of the world's growing worse, I have known that this was indulged in by persons who had thought that it could grow better. And in any case, the belief in human virtue is no cause to neglect the beating of our children.

I finally came to hold that one cannot distinguish between friends and acquaintances—and from then on my converse became a monologue. I sought those who would listen, when I could not go without them, and did not scruple to avoid them if ever I became self-sufficient, believing that in these unnecessary moments they would be most likely to do me harm. It is obvious that I came by preference to talk most intimately with strangers, and to correspond with my friends on postcards. I discovered that in confessing a reprehensible act, I would sometimes add a still more

reprehensible interpretation, and that my own judgements upon myself had been scrupulously cherished against me.

Not as by accident, but rather as though some voice had called me, I would awake in the night, and thereafter there was no sleeping. Could vigilance, under these circumstances, be an advance retribution for some yet uncommitted act? Though not by earthquake, people are driven into the street, pawing at one another, gentle and even courteous when necessary, but in the absolute crude, direct, revolting—and it is this panic, or should I say this glacier movement, that must be considered. Did we not go on a premature search of an already premature spring—and did we not find the skunk cabbages well thrust up, and brooks temporarily crossing the road from every field, while the same Eumenides still rode upon the shoulders of both of us? Who, seeing us munch chocolate, would have thought us dangerous? As a precaution, we carried not pistols, but rum. Feeling the flask against our moving leg, we were assured, aiming to protect ourselves not against the malignant bite of snakes, but from the benign mordency of the season. (Oh tender psychopaths—if you be young and one of us, and it is spring, you suffer beneath the triple proestrus of climacteric, personality, and calendar. I the while being condemned as an apologist; as though he who speaks were more goaded than he who remains silent!)

It was at this time also, while travelling south alone, that I met a man who attracted me by the obvious disquietude of his movements. As he sat facing me, we were finally able to talk with each other, though the conversation was an unsatisfactory one; for between long pauses, while both of us looked out the window, he would sigh and say, "Death is a strange thing," or "I should not fear to die," remarks which seemed to demand an answer as strongly as they precluded it. The real meaning of this, I came to understand in time, was that he was hurrying to a woman who was near death. After he had spoken at length, and in particular had talked with much understanding concerning suicide, at my suggestion we went to the back of the train, where he explained to me that he was religious, and believed firmly in the process of the Eucharist. Then, as we stood swaying with the car, and watching the tracks untwist from beneath us, he said that he had prayed, and that he was sure this much of his prayer would be granted—that he would arrive at the woman's bedside either while the life was yet in her,

or before the animal heat had left the body. This, he insisted, would be solace. It is in such matters as these, I answered, that we may feel the divisions between us: for I could be certain from the way he spoke, that he had thought a great deal upon this matter, and that his preference was a strong one—yet for my part, without the assistance of this death to sharpen the imagination, I did not see how he could feel so niggardly a concession to be the answer to a prayer.

I talked with him further, asking him questions as though he had come from some strange region. And upon my enquiring as to what he feared most of the future, he answered: "Destitution. Destitution of finances, destitution of mind, destitution of love. The inability to retort. The need of possessing one's opposite in years, sex, and texture of the skin; and the knowledge that by this need one has been made repugnant. The replacing of independence by solitude." His reply, I said, suggested that he must be well versed in this gloomy lore. I was sure that had I invited him further, he could have discoursed with authority on many aspects of fear and undemonstrative disaster, though every conclusion would have been drawn solely from the laboratory experiments of his own biography. With him, surely, each adversity would have its parallel in thought, its ideological equivalent, its sentence. And I knew that the world would hear no more of him.

Need one, his eyes shifting with humility, need one who is uneasy on finding himself in two mirrors, need one whose pity of mankind is but the projection of his own plight, need such a one relinquish however little his anger with those who cross his interests? Would a gifted daisy, from thinking upon his crowded slum conditions in the fields, find thereby any less necessity for resisting the encroachments of a neighbour? We must learn to what extent our thoughts are consistent with our lives, and to what extent compensatory; to what extent ideals are a guide to behaviour, and to what extent they are behaviour itself. We would not deny the mind; but merely remember that as the corrective of wrong thinking is right thinking, the corrective of all thinking is the body.

You moralistic dog—admitting a hierarchy in which you are subordinate, purely that you may have subordinates; licking the boots of a superior, that you may have yours in turn licked by an underling. To-day I talk out to you anonymously, not because

I should fear to tell you this to your face, but because my note of scorn would be lacking. And I would have you perceive the scorn even more than understand its logic. I would speak about you as a gargoyle would speak which, in times of storm, spouted forth words. Further, I have many times changed my neck-tie to go in search of you and explain to you my resentment, meaning to give you at once an analysis of yourself and an awareness of my hatred—but when I found you, lo! we were companions, exchanging confidences, congratulating each other, and parting with an engagement for our next meeting. I have watched you each year come to consort more irresponsibly with God; I have seen you take on ritual dignity, as the impure take on ritual cleanliness by laving the hands or by spilling goat's blood with the relevant mummery. I have seen you grow brutal under a vocabulary of love. If you wanted to thief, your code would expand to embrace the act of thieving. Feeling no need to drink, you will promptly despise a drunkard. Nor do you hesitate to adopt such attitudes. Yet he who flicks a weed unthinkingly is to be condemned as heinous, while a crime brewed in protracted spite is pardonable—for the doer, had his equipment been directed otherwise, would have been capable of great pity.

It is true that you are absolved of guilt through your disinterest in these matters, where I am guilty through too much husbandry of my despire. That a stranger, asking us each about the other, would receive from you a kindly, regretful account of my errors, and from me an explosion of venom against you, a credo of vindictiveness which would turn him from me in loathing. This third person, this "disinterested party" (and I already condemn him like yourself!) would further think it significant against me that, for every item of good fortune which has been bestowed upon you, he may find a corresponding item of failure in myself. But since even humility too consistently maintained becomes a boast, how could I expect otherwise than that my accusations against you should redound upon their author? Yes, I have shouted in still places that this aversion is beyond our clashing interests, that it is not rivalry, but *ars poetica*, and as such would necessarily entail rivalry as a subsidiary, but far subsidiary, aspect.

For all such reasons, and primarily because I was not minded to discredit my position through the difficulty of finding an account of

it which could also serve as its justification, I have been silent, until I can be silent no longer. I have waited, trusting that from somewhere would come a formula, which I could point to, saying: That figure there is you, and this other is myself. But despite much persistent praise of patience, I feel forced into a choice. And I have remained apart from you, that I might not be weakened by your good nature.

Yet there are times, in the very midst of such preoccupations, when my retaliation is of a different order. Both of us, and even my recurrent melancholy memories, seem separated from me, as I find myself busily at work upon my utterance. I would, on such occasions, deem it enough to place antinomies upon the page, to add up that which is subtracted by another, to reduce every statement by some counter-claim to zero. Did each assertion endow with life, and each denial cause destruction, at the close of my deposition the message would be non-existent; but, by the nature of words, after this mutual cancellation is complete, the document remains.

A GARDEN

BY GEORGE WHITSETT

The frozen camellias upon their litter of glamorous pain;
The fronded aurora, gossamer, dampened with rain;
The timorous lips of the river, whimpering among
the leaves;

The gorge, palsied and austere;
The wounded palm that grieves.

The step that is mocked and forsaken;
The hand that is covered with shadow;
The lintel that a wind has shaken.

THE SEAL

BY L. A. G. STRONG

JUST before six the rain lifted, and Rosamond started off to the shore by herself. George had been loud in his outbursts at its continuance, and after tea had sat down to write some letters. There had been all day in which to write them, but he would not begin; he kept pacing up and down the little farmhouse sitting-room and watching the sky. Now, characteristically, he would not come out till they were finished. He liked company when swimming, so Rosamond was going down to the shore to wait for him, in case he got the letters done in time.

She crossed the road, climbed a low fence, every wire bright with raindrops, and went slowly along the path through the broom. Now and then she brushed against a branch which sent off a delightful shower. A rabbit, hopping up the bank in front of her, left a little track like smoke on the silver grass. Even the burn below her, running dark and passionately full, made hardly a sound.

After the room at the farm, which on a wet day was dank and stuffy and on any day too small to hold a large fretful man, Rosamond's sense of escape was complete. She would have liked a walk in the rain by herself, along the rocks, and up by the headland; but George wanted her company when he went out, and if the weather had cleared while she was gone, he would have spent the evening trying not to have a grievance: a generous effort, so patent, and so unsuccessful that she could not steady herself even by concentrating on its fairmindedness. She was glad now that she had not come out before.

There was a sound across the burn. Old Mrs McLean had flung open her door, to feed the chickens. Rosamond waved, but could not be sure that the old lady saw her.

It was Rosamond's country and everything had always been the same. Mrs McLean's door had always made the same noise, and when she called her dog home in the evening it was always with the same call, for each dog had the same name, although this was the third Darach Rosamond had known.

Last summer, on their honeymoon, she and George had only been able to manage a bare ten days, but George had sworn the loss should be made good, and had dedicated the whole of the next holiday to the farm. That was one of the nicest things about George; he did want one to be happy. Still, he enjoyed the place too, tremendously, so that Rosamond need not reproach herself.

The broom stopped short, and she came out upon the sand. Flowers grew upon it until the final slope of the sand-hills, where only the reeds could live. Beyond was the beach. The thick carpeting of moss felt delightful, quite different to her bare feet, from the grass.

Since she had married, the place seemed somehow changed. Its immediate beauties were obvious, but there had always been a great deal more for her than the lights and colours which called forth George's "By Joves" and "I say, Rosamonds." George's personality was so loud—well, so vigorous—that one often needed a good while alone to let his echoes die away. It was lovely to have him interested in what one did, and he took a real, intelligent interest: yet the result was rather like his trick of taking up and continuing, in a hearty baritone, the tune she was humming quietly to herself as she did the housework.

Almost imperceptibly, the rain started again. She reached the sand-hills, turned to her right, and went through the gap beside the burn. She loved the sudden sight of the Islands one had this way, and, even though she remembered that to-day they would probably be invisible, she did not like breaking the pure face of the sand-hills with great sliding foot-marks.

The smaller Islands were lost, but a dark strip of Skye showed beneath a layer of woolly cloud. The sea was flat, and pale as a sheet. There was not even a bird on the beach: and the only sound was the indefinable whisper of soft rain upon sand.

She went very slowly down to the sea's edge, scooped a dry place—it was surprising how soon, even after a day's rain, one reached dry sand—and sat down, spreading her mackintosh about her like a tent. The rain was quickening: it began to patter audibly on the mackintosh, to collect in little gleaming rivulets, and run down jerkily into the sand. All was still and intimate. She looked slowly about her, and then down again at the rivulets.

Some instinct made her look at the sea. At first there was nothing, and then a dark object broke the surface. It looked like the

float for a lobster-pot: then it moved, and she saw that it was a seal. It was looking at her. She did not stir.

For a moment the head moved indecisively. Doubtless the seal could not make her out. Then, with a snort which carried perfectly over the still water, it dived again.

"Oh," breathed Rosamond, heart-broken, "don't go away"; it seemed that her own country was rejecting her, if the seal could not trust her. She scanned the surface in an agony, and saw at last an unmistakable dark shadow, clear over the white sand: and there he was again, with a sort of oiled suddenness, away to the right, but definitely nearer, staring at her. Without moving, Rosamond began to whistle, in low, clear, liquid notes, like the rain. The dark head became motionless. He was listening. Then she put into the notes her very soul, her childhood, all that meant happiness: she was calling to her own country, in one of the Island tunes she loved. Her soul and breath were one, and even in the uttermost of her appeal she had a sense of ecstasy, as of an artist consummating his vision alone, with none to praise him.

Then, slowly and softly, the big seal swam towards her, his dark head sleek on the water, his wondering eyes fixed upon her. Tears started to Rosamond's eyes.

"Oh," she breathed. "Bless you. You darling."

When he was quite near, she began to sing, in a low voice, the Seal Croon, and the Sea-gull of the Land under Waves, and all the time the great nursery creature stared at her with soft eyes, in attention and vague delight. When she stopped, he blew, and made a commotion in the water.

She began again, but something had alarmed him; and even as she realized this, she heard a hearty voice behind her, and George came charging headlong over the sand-hills, bringing down avalanches with each leap.

"Dr-ink to me o-o-nly—"

The seal gave him a long look, then it looked at Rosamond, and was gone, silently, a black shadow, detached from land and sea.

"By Jove," bellowed George excitedly, "there goes a seal—look, Rosamond—see him?—There he goes—there!—By Jove, a whopper!"

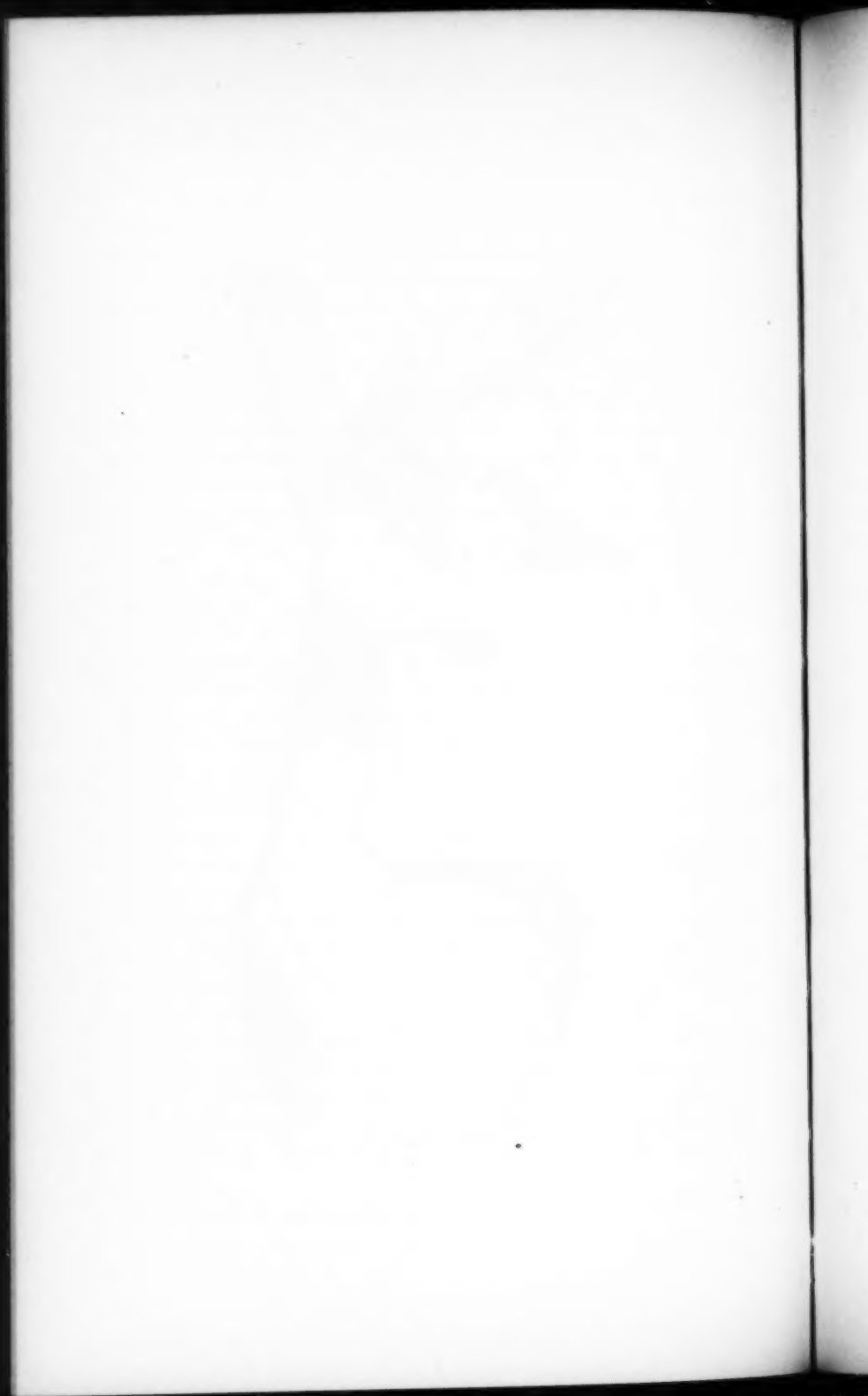
He plunged up panting to where she sat.

"I'd no idea they came in so close," he cried. "Did you see him?"

"Yes," said Rosamond.



SIAMESE CAT. BY DUNCAN FERGUSON



TWO POEMS

BY HAROLD LEWIS COOK

THE QUEST

I, who made of love a rope
To hang me by,
Can find in all this world no place
Wherein to die.

And I, who long have made of Time
A tumbril cart,
Cannot, however great my strength,
Make the wheels start.

Where is the tree grown tall enough?
Where is the hour?
Till then no pity in a leaf,
No music in a tower.

TURN AWAY!

This play of wind in the trees,
What is it to the dead?
And what is the sun to them,
Or white stars overhead?

So long have they slept here—
An eternity alone—
That, sleeping, they have changed:
They who were flesh are stone.

And the soft worm that creeps
Has turned away again,
And the sharp mole, and roots,
And all sound, and the rain.

TWO POEMS

And now men turn away
Forgetting who lies here.
The graves have sunk. Oh none
Any more goes near

Save only the dipping moon,
And a snow of stars at night,
Save only the toad and the bat,
And time, and spring, and light.

MATTER AND THE JOYOUS ART

BY H. M. KALLEN

HISTORICALLY, materialists are a sad race. It is true that Democritus their forefather was called The Laughing Philosopher, but his laughter, I am pretty sure, came through the other side of his mouth. It was not from the joy of life he laughed. Resigned to Necessity and Death, he savoured a dour satisfaction from feeling superior to those who fancied themselves free and immortal. He laughed at them that he might not weep for himself. The classic Epicureans who followed him were moved in the same ways. They feasted out of no joy in the feast, but out of the fear of death. Their pleasures were not a yea-saying to life, but an anaesthetic against the terror lest they lose it. That which they affirmed, when they affirmed anything, was quietist, ascetic, and withdrawn: vision without hope, pity without endeavour; regretful acquiescence in the inevitable fate which natural law imposed and true reason revealed. And ever since, Materialists have either been sad and sensual like Omar Khayyam or pitiful and puritan like George Santayana. Matter by itself they might have happily enjoyed; but the laws of matter, their inexorable compulsion, their fatality never-to-be estopped, the weakness and helplessness of man before their power, these were reminders of death which set up and kept up the prevailing materialist mood.

Time was when also Bertrand Russell walked among the prophets mourning human fate before the ark of natural law. Then he glorified the liberty which a man could win by insight into the ineluctable bondage. He wrote of such a free man's worship, regretted death, and made a consolation against the weakness and alienity of our spirit in the world of nature by a philosophy which commended acknowledgement, understanding, and resignation.

But that time was before Einstein had traced the geodesic of

NOTE: *Philosophy*. By Bertrand Russell. 8vo. 307 pages. W. W. Norton and Company. \$3.

The Analysis of Matter. By Bertrand Russell. 8vo. 408 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$6.

a new heaven and Bohr had laid out the electronic ground-plans of a new earth. Since these re-creations, impenetrable matter has become dissolvable into something more like mind; imponderable mind has become condensed into something more like matter; law has ceased to be so inexorable and determinism so determinate. The perspectives of mind have entered into the constitution of matter; the causality of matter has become a point of reference for mind. Man and nature are seen to be more akin than was formerly thought. Idealism has gained new arguments furnished by physics, though because physics furnishes them Idealism can hardly be truer than Materialism. Rather do both point to a *tertium quid* which is the neutral stuff whence matter and mind both emerge. This neutral stuff consists of "events." Matter is a series or process of such events in Einsteinian time-and-space. Mind is another series of such events culminating inside our heads. The laws of mind are as atomic as the laws of matter, but the forms of matter are there defined by physics, and the forms of mind are there revealed, ultimately, by introspection; they involve especially memory and images, the subjectivity of individual perspectives. For this reason the Behaviorist account of mind, although it is to be used to the limit, cannot be an ultimately correct one. Mind and matter meet and overlap in perceptions. These we take twice over; once as events in our experiences, again as events in the external world in which the laws of physics verify themselves or fail to. In them are the ultimate data of our knowledge, neither mental nor material, neither true nor false, but organizable into matter or mind and by their uses, verities or errors.

This, I think, is the novel phase of Mr Russell's current teaching. Some of it he has said before, but he says it here with a new emphasis and new significance. To no small degree moreover, Philosophy is a plain man's summary of the specialist's account of matter in *The Analysis*. To a still greater degree it is Mr Russell's own latest summing-up and present arrangement of things he has said elsewhere more fully and technically. That there also should be much that is novel and debatable goes, of course, without saying: Russell is among those rare philosophers who rethink, rather than repeat, and who are not afraid to change their minds and say so. If there were space, there are several propositions I should like to argue with him: especially the one that the mind is inside the

head, and his notion of a static "truth." Even if we could come to no agreement on these subjects, I should be inclined to welcome him among the pragmatists. If he has not arrived, he is on the threshold. But that he can pass it I am not sure.

The obstruction lies, I think, in his subversive logical skill rather than in any radical differences of perception and insight. I have already called attention, in *THE DIAL*,¹ to a certain incommensurability between the cubistic angular architecture and transparency of Russell's style and the confusion and opacity of the world it applies to. To those actually working in matter or operating with mind, the clear order of *The Analysis* must have the thinness of a dream; the structure of the Philosophy, the pattern of a picture in a frame. It may be, indeed, that Mr Russell is himself convinced that the world must be prevailingly a clear order behind the dark confusion, for he suggests that we know so much physics and so little anything else because the structure of language is an adequate sample of the structure of time-and-space. Hence, even when he is acknowledging the reality of change, or recognizing the fringe of vagueness that attends the clearest thing, he gives an impression of something unchanging, static, and finished, as more important. Old habits of language and logic seem sharper than new convictions about nature and man; words and symbols stand each outside the other in unyielding arabesques of thought designed to name and point to a world all sequences of "events" that compenetrates and overlap. The happier order of the language can hardly fail to infect the troublesome movement of the vision that occasions it.

But the general effect of this vision on the temper and tone of our philosopher has a savour no reader should miss. Philosophy is a gay book, given its theme. In it the author is not only at ease, but at play. It neither exhorts nor denounces nor warns; it enlightens. With natural law and scientific determinism still at the heart of its vision, it comes, not as a catechism of consolations, but as an adventure toward the good life.

"The world presented for our belief by a philosophy based upon modern science," Mr Russell concludes, "is in many ways less alien to ourselves than the world of matter as conceived in former cen-

¹ Logical Form and Social Salvation, *THE DIAL*, December 1927.

turies. The events that happen in our minds are parts of the course of nature, and we do not know that the events which happen elsewhere are of a totally different kind. The physical world, so far as science can show at present, is perhaps less rigidly determined by causal laws than it was thought to be; one might, more or less fancifully, attribute even to the atom a kind of limited free will. There is no need to think of ourselves as powerless and small in the grip of vast cosmic forces. . . . No doubt there are limits to our power . . . but we cannot say what the limits are except in a quite abstract way, such as that we cannot create energy. . . . What is important is to be able to direct energy into this or that channel, and this we can do more and more as our knowledge of science increases. . . . History, science, and philosophy all make us aware of the great collective achievements of mankind. . . . Philosophy should make known to us the ends of life, and the elements in life that have value on their own account. However our freedom may be limited in the causal sphere, we need admit no limitation to our freedom in the sphere of values: what we judge good on its own account, we may continue to judge good, without regard to anything but our own feeling. . . . Love, beauty, knowledge, and joy of life: these things retain their lustre however wide our purview. . . ."

The knowledge of matter which is science, then, sets us free for the affirmations of life. Materialism, which had begun in a realization of human helplessness and a contemplation of death is herein transformed into a realization of power and a vision of freedom and excellence. The philosophy of matter becomes the practice of a joyous art.



MISS MERRIAL HOPE. BY HENRY J. GLINTENKAMP

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MEDIAEVAL

BY OLIVER LA FARGE *2nd*

WE left San Juan Bautista, mosquitoes, cafés, dysentery, late in the afternoon. The hot day dissolved into soft evening, full of gracious coolness and the scent of green things. We were strung out between the trees in single file. Night silhouettes never seem clear-cut in the tropics but velvety at the edges. The stars themselves are bigger, less definite, and faintly golden.

I caught up with the pack mules and whistled them into life. They disappeared again before me. Where roads forked, our head man would wait, a cigarette gleaming and fading, someone half seen on a moving horse ahead of the pack train, calling in Spanish, "This way." It was so nearly dark that when I pulled hard at my cigarette, for a few seconds afterwards I could not see the trees.

At the Rio Colorado we woke the boatmen, unpacked by the light of a kerosene lantern, and led the animals down the bank—wide-nostrilled, doubtful. Saddles and packs were piled into the long narrow dug-out. The lantern followed. Horses and mules with high heads and erect ears moved reluctantly into the dark ripples. The dug-out left the bank, we saw the spot of light recede, the heads of animals, and the outline of the man in the stern, erect, with his twelve-foot pole like a spear, all surrounded by a sphere of blackness.

My turn came; I sat on a saddle amidships with a couple of halters in each hand. The canoe was just of a width to let my knees spread normally, yet those two men, bow and stern, stood high and calm. We made a trickling sound in the water. Beyond the reach of the lantern it was oily black. The horses were like chess knights, mere outstretched heads and distended nostrils. They pulled the halters taut. We travelled through nowhere, then we grounded and the animals heaved forward with a rush.

We packed, saddled, and went on. This is the way people used to travel in the Middle Ages, I thought, we have penalized ourselves with good roads and bridges.

The air was full of the warm caressing night and the growth of things. There was Orion in his winter position, high up. The Bears cannot compare with him; he is the Lord of Nostalgia.

White houses on each side of the trail showed ghostly. They became frequent, closed together to line an unreal street. We turned to the left. Our head man had stopped under a lantern. The pack train bunched up behind him, standing in their tracks, heads low.

"This is Nacajuca, we can sleep at the Guest House here."

Ahead of us we heard a guitar. Our horses' hooves rang on cobble-stones, we were riding with a gentle clank of iron shoes and whisper of bits and spurs, between white-colonnaded shuttered houses. There was another lamp, and three men under an archway seated before a fourth playing a guitar, the night watch. One of them took us across the plaza, past a simple church with an outside stairway to the belfry making an eccentric arc of shadow against the white wall, past the market, just a square roof on white columns and cross-beams of structural necessity, which a lantern within turned into a vastly significant, modern design.

We stopped by another colonnaded house. The watchman hammered on the door.

"Doña Teresa, Doña Teresa, aqui vienen gente para posar la noche!"

For a long time silence; then a light, and whispering behind the bolted door. We all shouted.

Something was said from within. There were explanations and hesitations. At last the door swung open, and Doña Teresa inspected us, candle in hand. We rode into the front room, unsaddled, and drove our horses through a dark second room and an archway behind, that might have given on to the Pit. We had travelled so far, we arrived so late; she made a motherly bustle as she prepared cocoa while we slung our hammocks.

PRELUDE

BY RALPH CHEEVER DUNNING

Seeing this ulcer redden to a head
I will aloof and draw a parallel
Under the Lion and out towards Hercules
Along the frontiers of the false eternal
So when we meet in hate or part in love
We'll know not which is under or above
Nor any word that any tongue can tell
Shall make this corpse of honour seem less dead.

*Use the old values, speak the old jargon still
Life is a rigolade, a dream, or what you will.*

I have no friend that I should say farewell.
A lonesome heaven and a separate hell
Divide my soul. Bastard of Chance
The Comet of a Phantom Universe
Too fond to bless and much too proud to curse
Still wouldst thou live and let thy memory die
In souvenirs of opium afternoons
Lying at ease till evening and a moon
So big it made a margin of the sky
Covered thy loves and dawning wish to die?
Who shall forgive the laugh thou wouldst not laugh
And pride that stiffened at a kiss as such?
"Not modesty but scorn" thine epitaph
Thy lying epitaph who loved the world too much.

THE WATERMELON AND THE SAINT

(For Lyle Saxon)

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

I NEVER saw my father with a spade or a hoe trifling with other crops for so much as an hour, but have seen him come out of the watermelon-patch with soiled greenish hands. Boastfully he would show us the weeds he had extracted and would watch his sons weeding the patch as if he could see the death of every tare being added to each vine as life.

He would explain to us that most great things have humble lineages. The good melon vines were an example, and akin to the human race. Human beings bearing the standards of Time have been nurtured by humble parents as had these luscious watermelons.

To the son that was fired by such analogies to work hardest, the father made a promise: "This summer on the Feast Day of Saint Ouleanus you shall take a load of watermelons to distribute to the worshippers." This pledge meant little to any but the one who received it. For Saint Ouleanus was only a poor saint, the patron of the neighbourhood. He was so poor that he owned not even a small monastery. Nor was he known to the people, either through books or on the wings of folk-lore. The Armenians—essentially a water-worshipping people—had given the name to a sweet little spring which bubbled out of the rock. Why should children be jealous of their brother? Almost every spring coming out of a rock was christened, or sanctified by a name—was called a saint. Indeed, aside from the cognomen nobody knew anything about him. His shrine was close by our land. The only offerings denoting a saintly presence were the native shrubs decorated with innumerable rags or ribbons which people had torn from their clothes or brought with them in homage to the unknown martyr.

My father's love for his watermelon-patch was greater than for all the rest of the crops. The watermelons—kings of the realm of the fruits—were to him as gold to a miser. It was not his wish to keep them to rot but to be with them, to give them away with his

own hands, and to boast of his new crop, or hear others praise it. How often I have contracted the joy that was his as I watched him artfully manipulating a watermelon and opening the heart of the fruit—as if it were his own heart—to serve to an appreciating friend.

To be able to convince him that it was necessary he should be in such and such a place, even for one day, rather than abiding by his patch was difficult. During the entire summer not more than half a dozen matters could challenge him to leave his hallowed post. If the people saw him in the village during the summer months they would attach a mysterious meaning to his visit. How could he prefer them to his watermelons? And they would devise a cause with dimensions.

To guess his grief in detaching himself from his watermelons was easy. But his joy on returning to them was inconceivable. On his return then, how befitting a miracle in relation to them! He would fall among the vines as a parent after a long absence embraces his children. Criss-cross, the breadth and length of the field he went several times, arranging each vine that had been disturbed by the wind, apportioning the ground equally among the vines which were tender, pulling a large weed here or there, straightening himself, with a victorious snort—a sign also that he was in good humour. Then simultaneously he would make a pompous show of the tares as if they were thieves or destructive animals he had captured, and would cast them on top of a promising young melon to protect it from the sun, and as warning to the uninitiated.

He would then take slow and courteous leave of plant, blossom, and fruit, and begin his tour of inspection. First he noticed a freshly excavated rat-hole on the rim of the field. The cursed rats always know the rim from the field! Well, that could be settled; he would have someone flood the hole. A little farther on hoof-marks arrested him—as irritating as rat-holes. That son of his should not graze the oxen so close to the vines! Inspecting every dale, hill, and tree, he would make his circle wider and wider, as an eagle in search of something gyrates until he reaches his apex.

I recall a time when he left his field for a day and a night. A cousin had been appointed in his place to guard the watermelons with me, and in Put Aringe a cousin was more sociable with a cousin than a father ever could be with a son. When I was with my father

sleep always came early to sharpen the dulness. But a cousin's quips were more powerful than sleep. We stayed up until the late moon was out. That was the first time I had seen the big watermelons in the moonlight—animals more mysterious than minotaurs—drinking the moonlight, slowly expanding. It was only after much joy that fun and sleep were reconciled.

Cousin left early in the morning and I went to irrigate the turnips and cabbages. While I was guiding the water, oblivious of everything, the previous night's vision of the watermelons was re-created in me—of the watermelons like giant elephants drinking moonlight. I hastened to open one of the fruits with my long knife. I had never before given a thought to what the real watermelon was. But no sooner had the fruit revealed its remarkable red pattern than I remembered the untrustworthy stream, and looking, I could see it tear the side of the field as when a live wire comes in contact with a human body. I left the watermelon and hastened to the accident, forgetting to observe the almost animate designs of the fruit, forgetting to drink moonlight, forgetting my celestial breakfast.

My father's impatient form burst from the opposite horizon as the sun all at once, standing on its rays, illuminated the field. Man and the sun embraced the watermelon patch at the same instant. One could not tell whose was the glory. My father's hands, which were clasped on his back, fell pendulous to his sides. He had seen the divided watermelon. He looked all around. Could someone have played a trick? The only human outline was his son's a field away. The fruit was freshly cut; his son would have had no reason to abandon it. He sat on his haunches and let himself think. Finally he arrived at a startling conclusion and pined that one worthy of a miracle should hear it.

The thought was sent out; the answer came in the person of the venerable miller. All millers are venerable. As in winter a priest is being sought, so in summer is a miller expected—either to come, or to go to. The village mills were near because the stream of water was close by our land. The miller had brought for my father, a cake made by his own hands, which was a proof that he had not come simply to be treated to a watermelon.

Having finished my morning's duties, I went to my father who

was sitting under the tall poplar-trees with his friend, to answer what questions he considered necessary to ask. But he did not seem to be interested in asking questions. He was in a reverent mood. I thought: Is this mood in honour of the miller?—this miller whose grey beard reached down as the branches of the trees reached up, and was sensitive to the wind as the poplar-leaves. This miller, it was said, was never known to have buttoned the breast of his clothes even in the bitter cold of winter. He looked reverently toward the melon field, then at my father. "May God wither evil eyes ere their greedy looks wither a single leaf of your bountiful patch!"

"Aye, aye, friend," assented my father, "God has already established your wish." The miller stroked his beard with both hands for having expressed God's wish so appropriately.

"It is a miracle, no less," continued my father and the miller was awed as if he had already been told of the miracle. "I have been looking around the field and have found no trace of robbers, no foreign foot-tracks, no plant disturbed. Yet, friend, on yonder hill is a freshly cut melon, as sweet as it looks. It seems not to have been touched by human hands. Had this been the work of human hands, the man would have tasted it, would have taken it along with him, would have done something. . . . It would be false for me to have any belief but that Saint Ouleanus has visited this humble patch, has selected a small fruit yet undoubtedly one of the finest, and has opened it for the birds that they might help themselves . . ."

I sat clasping my wet legs with my bare arms, watching rainbows in the waterdrops that were rolling down my legs—embryos of rainbows implanted in the drops by the morning sun. The prisms rolled down and disappeared—were shattered about my feet.

"Aye, aye, friend," sighed my father, "so it must have been!"

"Aye, aye," said the vibrant beard of the miller, "so it must!" the intonations of their voices sounding sweeter and sweeter. My father gave me a side glance to see if I were moved, weeping. But at this moment I detached myself from them. A gigantic egoistic feeling was beginning to arise in me and I was forced to slip away from the spellbound narrator and his audience—to laugh.

The story so faithfully sown, took root in the miller and grew

and spread till it became one of the most famous and accepted of miracles. The miller stated that he had seen the very Saint with his earthly eyes, had observed the martyr in the patch and the manner in which he had cut the melon, how he had prayed with outstretched arms, and finally drifting away, had disappeared in the air.

As a result the miller was given the privilege of taking unto himself as many watermelons in a year as he could use.

JUNGLE RIVER

BY GLENN WARD DRESBACH

The hot moist breath that tropic earth exhales
Is held in jungle by the heavy air
And colours glinting like a serpent's scales
Creep out of shadow-patterns everywhere.
And under boughs that coiling vines have bent
The oily silent river slides away
Into the insect-whirl, at last to vent
Its yellow poison in an azure bay.

On each dead limb a buzzard's silhouette
Observes the drifting log turn crocodile,
And in a hollowed log a back of jet
Streams and the paddle dips another mile
To some half tipsy wharf where produce piles
And black girls wait with moist inviting smiles.

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SIOUX DRAWING - 1882

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IRISH LETTER

July, 1928

THERE are still two Irelands, and I only accentuate this statement when I say that if you ask a patriotic Irishman—whether the final product of civilization in Ireland is exactly a patriot is another matter—if any progress is being made towards unity, he will answer, Certainly, meaning that it is his Ireland which is prevailing. The Ireland which calls itself “Irish Ireland,” and is still strong enough to enforce the teaching of the Irish language in the schools, professes confidence that in a generation or two Ireland will be an Irish-speaking community; while the Anglo-Irish, elated by the victory of their ideals, are at least equally confident that less and less will be heard of the old language as Ireland profits by the lessons of responsibility. It is hardly possible to doubt that in this matter it is the Anglo-Irish who are right. Ireland has been saved by the sensible conduct of the old Unionist population, who have given their whole-hearted support to the new government. When we consider their admirable behaviour, and contrast the good humour with which they have adapted themselves to an unwelcome situation with the vague and still clamorous dissatisfaction of those who have brought it about, we must conclude that Unionism has proved the best school of nationality.

“Irish Ireland,” however, possesses one important advantage over its rival, similar to the advantage enjoyed in a divided kingdom by the party which retains in custody the person of the monarch. The old Irish language belongs in a special sense to this party inasmuch as it is this party which would make the language, with all its indefeasible claims to an ancient inheritance, the supreme arbiter of the situation. “No Irish language, no Irish nation”; “it is impossible,” says Mr De Valera, “to imagine Ireland free without its being Gaelic.” The Anglo-Irish are willing to maintain the old language, to put its name to all public documents, to give it comfortable days in honourable retirement, but it is “Irish Ireland” which wishes to revive its absolute sway. What then to do with

this inconvenient claimant? I have a private impression that the newly constituted Free State government is seriously embarrassed by this problem, and would give a good deal to be rid of it. I hardly think that the language is now much loved really for its present self: in itself it is rather a cross-grained ignorant old survivor, addicted to cursing and to crooning snatches of ancient song in a voice which makes one feel creepy. There are indeed many who love it for what it was; and when, like Edmund Spenser in his day, we cause the passionate love-poems written in Irish even one hundred years ago "to be translated unto us," we cannot but feel towards this old language as we might feel when gazing upon the withered age of some village crone, renowned in former days for her matchless beauty and romantic history.

It is a pity that Ireland has never produced a writer with a philosophic cast of mind, at least one to whom people in Ireland generally have been disposed to listen. From the cultural point of view they possess one great advantage in the presence amongst them of an ancient language, and of a closed literature reaching back into a past which continually piques and baffles the historic imagination. This was enough to give Ireland, for literary purposes, the full status of nationality. It is impossible to over-estimate the advantage of this possession as a source of rejuvenation and distinction in the use of the work-a-day English language. But to see advantages in their proper places belongs to the philosophic mind, and this gift of the gods to Ireland has become a veritable apple of discord, simply because there is no one in Ireland who knows precisely what to do with it. It was an evil day for Ireland when Eris the goddess of discord (politics in a word) snatched at this great cultural gift; for in abusing the gift, Ireland is as likely as not to forfeit its use. No one indeed could perform a greater service to Ireland than to show convincingly what Ireland should do with it. Politics interfered in this matter where it had no real concern. The whole argument of "Irish Ireland" is extremely questionable, and it may very well be that the deliberate change by a nation of its language is a far more powerful demonstration of national vitality than the most tenacious preservation of a language from century to century could ever be. We see this in the history of Ireland, where in the time of O'Connell, with as much delibera-

tion as nations use in such matters, the Irish-speaking population, wearying of that ancient world into which the language closed it took to English, rising at once into a political self-consciousness, which proved highly embarrassing to its imperial neighbour. Contrast in this respect Ireland with Wales, where no O'Connell rose to convince his compatriots that they were "the finest peasantry in the world," and that to demonstrate their equality with the English they had only to wear top-hats and to talk English at least as well as the yokels of Yorkshire and Sussex. Wales indeed has had its Lloyd George if not its Parnell; but where are its Bernard Shaws and George Moores, its Yeates and AEs? I have never been able to get rid of an impression of the spiritual status of Wales acquired one evening long ago in Bangor, when to beguile the tedium of waiting for a train I walked up and down the main street and was presently joined by a man who proved to be a village schoolmaster. As we walked, he confessed to me that he had suddenly felt the need of talking to somebody in English—"in Corwen, where I live," he said, "they talk of nothing but farming." Yet if a Welsh O'Connell were to persuade his countrymen to give up their language, the impoverishment in the cultural resources of the British Islands would not be negligible.

When a writer finds that a suggestion of his own, which received no attention when it was made, has occurred later on by force of circumstances to others, he may perhaps be allowed to quote himself, just as Cassandra may have been allowed the melancholy privilege of saying, I told you so. Writing in the first series of *The Irish Statesman*, in 1919, I suggested that the old language should be granted a strip of Irish territory. "If it could only be managed, there might be a solution of the Irish language problem in the regular establishment of an Irish-speaking community in a province of its own—answering to Wales in Great Britain—say, a large slice of Munster and Connaught. Even the most confident Gaelic Leaguer must occasionally have his doubts of being able to do in Ireland what the Czechs have done in Bohemia. Let them begin with an Irish Wales—it might really be managed, even to the point of obtaining assistance from the British Government, which might be glad enough to see a movement thus disposed of, which is a large part of the inspiration of Sinn Féin. The Irish language,

within a territory of its own, might more hopefully attempt the conquest of the rest of Ireland. Heaven knows whether we should not all in time want to go and live there! . . . The Irish language will never command the respect due to it until it has a bit of land of its own." There is now some talk of a separately established Gaeltacht, and this appears to me to be the ideal solution of the language problem.

There died lately in the Isle of Wight an aged man with whom passed away a form of idealism belonging not so much to Ireland as to that period in England which was marked by a response to the influence of Carlyle—now, as it would seem, altogether spent. Kingsley had the same sense of heroism in the past as Standish O'Grady, and in several respects the two men might be compared: in their boyish high spirits, in their love of the Elizabethan period, and even in their literary styles. An Anglo-Irish Kingsley O'Grady might have remained, writing Carlylese sociology and books for boys, but for a memorable "Wet Day" which kept him indoors in a large private library, where he stumbled on O'Halloran's account of pre-Christian Ireland. The Irish Literary Movement may almost be said to have grown out of that "wet day." O'Grady had a delicate, might I say Christian sense of heroism in the past, and in lighting upon a virgin subject-matter, lying close to his doors, was more fortunate than Kingsley, who had to turn back to the Anglo-Saxon period and to Greek mythology, with little hope of finding anything new and strange. It was O'Grady who discovered the true use of the ancient Irish language and literature for any national literary development, which, as he never thought of doubting, must be in the English language. Yeats, AE, James Stephens, even Arthur Griffith and P. H. Pearse, have avowed themselves his disciples. The names last mentioned remind one that a good many things which O'Grady's sad old face contemplated with disapproval took direction partly from his influence. He had dreamed of an Ireland with a spiritual mission, and the old Unionist order was the setting to which he had accustomed his expectation.

JOHN EGLINTON

VIENNA LETTER

July, 1928

IT IS awkward to speak of one's own work, but to do so is a temptation; and the moment of launching has its special suspense. In attempting to unfold an idea we soon realize how much is hidden even from ourselves, who should find it all plain before us. A work never seems so self-sufficient as at the instant when we supposed we were going to be able to make it subserve this or that unholy end. The most "likely" as they say, commentator on one's work, is also the most handicapped, the least empowered to unravel the network of motives. For he has made every effort to interweave the internal with the external, strand by strand, and to leave no loose ends. So he is in difficulties at the outset.

We hear of poet and musician working toward a common end—Corneille with Lully, Calzabigi with Gluck, Daponte and Schikaneder with Mozart. That such instances exist would hardly justify any one's expecting, however, that I should of necessity resort to such an expedient. There is in Nadler's *Literaturgeschichte*, I notice, a passage concerning my work, which states that my earliest dramas had unconsciously felt after music, a trend which the word "lyrical" denotes but approximately. And the author is right; but to my mind the word is accurate. The French call an opera a *drame lyrique*, and in this respect they are doubtless instinctively closer to the Ancients than we—they never wholly forgot that ancient tragedy was sung tragedy.

And so the result was this collaboration,¹ which in the course of eighteen years has gradually become a matter of habit. But there have been pauses in the progress—a period of eight or nine years in the last instance—yet certainly not through any loss of interest in the concept—it was merely that other things were needing to take form: a comedy, the Salzburger Welttheater, a tragedy, the as yet unpublished beginnings of a novel. Since 1920 a certain subject, a certain group of characters, had played in the imagination, glittering and intangible, like a half hidden stream—the very material of the work just completed: the home-coming of Helen and

¹ Egyptian Helen, with score by Richard Strauss, to be produced in New York the coming season.

Menelaus. A certain curiosity had taken hold of the imagination, centring on these mythical characters as if they were real people about whose lives we knew something, although at important points the connexion was missing. The night the Greeks swarmed into burning Troy (since 1914 it is easier to picture the terrors of such a night) the night Menelaus found his wife in one of the burning palaces and carried her out through the tottering walls—her, his loved stolen mate, the most beautiful woman in the world, cause of the war, of those ten terrible years, of the plain filled with dead, of this conflagration; widow of Paris, and friend of Priam's sons—these ten or twelve now dead or dying—and thus widow, as though it were not already enough, of these ten or twelve young princes! To be confronted with all this! It is unimaginable—and is safe from every dramatist: no text, even that of Shakespeare, could do it justice, and I am sure that Menelaus himself kept silence as he bore to his ship this woman who remained, as before, the most beautiful woman in the world. We do not know what followed. But years after, when he was travelling through the kingdoms of Greece to seek news of his lost father, Ulysses' son came to Sparta—and the fourth canto of the *Odyssey* gives us the clearest report of what he found there, in colours as fresh as though applied yesterday. He finds Menelaus in his palace, a kingly, hospitable man, "stately as a god"; and Helen, the house-keeper of the palace, beautiful as ever, a queen—apparently happy—in this peaceful setting. They are celebrating the marriages of their children, a son and a daughter. They speak of Troy and the war, as things of the past, Menelaus with calm dignity, as of one of the major experiences of his life, but Helen with that elate, sovereign air which Homer imparts to her always—touching on past events and the subject of her guilt, lightly and elegantly, as when she says of the war (by way merely of indicating time): "When ye Grecians came to Troy because of me, immodest one, arousing fierce war . . ." she says it quite lightly: "When through my hapless adventure this story came about which is too well known and too unworthy to linger over."

Astonishing to treat so famous and dreadful an event so lightly. And another word is on the tip of our tongue: how modern, how near in expression to our own times. But one asks involuntarily, what had happened meanwhile? What has intervened for these two, between that night and this serenity in which Telemachus

finds her? What can have occurred to make this union once more peaceful and halcyon? It is extraordinary—even making vast allowances for heroes and demi-gods. Sufficiently keen curiosity, furthermore, can be transformed into inspiration. There was a theme here—if curiosity could be made productive—perhaps a lyric theme in quest of music, though at first I did not realize this. The subject occupied me from the year 1920 on. We have, of course, the *Helen* of Euripides, the only ancient poem that treats of this interval—of the return of Helen and Menelaus from Troy. In it the theme of a "phantom" Helen emerges—a second Helen who is not Trojan, but Egyptian. We are in Egypt, or on the island of Pharos which is a part of Egypt, before a royal castle. Menelaus enters, alone, on his return from Troy. For months his ship has been wandering, blown from coast to coast, but always driven off the homeward course. Helen, his reclaimed wife, has been left behind with his warriors in a concealed cove and he is seeking counsel, help, some oracle to tell him how he can find the way home. Then from the columns of the castle Helen emerges, not the beautiful, sadly compromised Helen left by him in the ship; but still another who is yet the same. And she will have it that she is his wife, insisting that the other Helen in the ship, is nothing and no one, a phantom, a make-believe, whom Hera had put in the arms of Paris to delude the Greeks. For the sake of this phantom a ten-years' war had been waged, tens of thousands of the finest men had perished, the most flourishing city of Asia had sunk into ashes. Meanwhile she, the real Helen has been borne over the sea by Hermes, and has lived in this royal castle, honoured and protected by the aged Proteus. Now however his son is on the throne, and his one desire is to marry her. Menelaus therefore, to whom she has always been faithful, must quickly and secretly steal her away. The preparations for this flight, its execution, and finally the appearance of the Dioscuri who pacify the enraged Egyptian monarch—this is the plot of Euripides' play.

It is easy to see why Menelaus should not immediately have full confidence in this creature who appeared before him to tell him that he had spent ten years in the field for the sake of a ghost, had sacrificed the blood of tens of thousands of Greeks to a ghost, had set fire to a great city in behalf of a ghost, and was now journeying homeward with a ghost as his companion. They engage for a long time in sharp Euripidean argument; and now he utters the beau-

tiful and accurate words: "I trust the burden of past sufferings more than I trust thee!" Indeed this must seem to him too easy a shedding of grave responsibilities. But at this moment a messenger arrives and really announces that the creature who was thought to be Helen has disappeared from the vessel, dissolving in a wisp of fiery air. What is there for Menelaus to cling to but the one Helen who is left—her purity and unguilt superadded—and to flee with her before the Egyptian king can deprive him of her also? So far Euripides. But if the Trojan war was waged in behalf of a spectre, and this Helen of Egypt is the one true Helen, then the Trojan war was a nightmare, and the whole falls into two halves, a ghost story and an idyll, which have nothing to do with each other—and all this is not very interesting. I forgot Euripides, but my imagination continued to dwell on the episode of the two returning together. What dread thing could have happened, to bring about their reconciliation? It was to me so puzzling; perhaps the only solution was witchcraft; but witchcraft solves nothing for our emotions. The powers of nature would have to participate—an atmosphere of industrious beings at once indifferent and helpful. Less to cure the half-goddess than for Menelaus, so distraught, confronted by such fatefulness, such complications and guilt—and he but human. I immediately perceived the noble, tragic aspect of this much derided figure. He was for me the embodiment of the West, and she the inexhaustible strength of the Orient. He stood for law, marriage, fatherhood. She soared above all that, the mysterious, enchanting, never-to-be-fettered goddess. Years ago I entered in my note-book a sentence from Bachofen: "Helen was not endowed with all the charms of Pandora merely to resign herself to the exclusive possession of one man." What demonism pervades such a statement! It could stand on the title-page of Wedekind's *Erdgeist*. Wedekind was the man to bring out the full purport of such a sentence, and to make of it something remarkable and terrifying.

Two or three years later I asked Strauss to wait for me in his office at the opera. "I want to go over a two-act plot with you," I said. "When the curtain rises we are in a palace, or kind of villa on the sea. The palace belongs to a handsome young person who is the daughter of a certain king and the mistress of Poseidon."

"Does Poseidon appear?"

"No, Poseidon does not appear. No gods at all. Accept everything just as though it took place two or three years ago, somewhere between Moscow and New York. This young person, whom I call Aithra, is often left alone by her lover. But he may arrive at any moment. Thus, every evening she has the table set for two—and it is set for two now, and the stage is brilliantly lighted. She has servants and a well-furnished house, but not much company.

"Among the appurtenances of this room there is a mussel which is aware of everything that happens at sea; and in order to amuse Aithra, it tells her everything it knows.

"One evening the mussel announces that in a ship close at hand a remarkable thing is occurring. A man on this ship entrusts the helm to another, goes below, gazes on a very beautiful woman who lies there sleeping, gently covers her beautiful face with a cloth, then draws out a peculiar curved dagger, and prepares to kill her. 'Send a storm,' cries the mussel, excited by its own tale. 'And be quick! Or the woman is lost!'"

"Can Aithra do that?"

"Yes, she is magician enough. The storm swoops down, lashing the vessel till its timbers groan; and thus the murder is prevented. But Aithra has first asked hastily who the man and woman are, and the mussel has said that they are Helen of Troy and Menelaus, her husband. Aithra cannot contain herself for joy and passes from prose into a rhapsodic little aria. Then she rushes into the next room, hides, and directs a servant to lead the shipwrecked couple there by torch-light. For the mussel has also announced that the man who was about to slay his wife is now—since they have both been washed overboard—making every effort to convey her to safety; and Aithra has immediately commanded the storm to abate.

"Thus the stage is empty, and in the doorway of the brightly lighted room a man appears, holding a curved dagger between his teeth, and leading a most beautiful fair-haired woman by the hand. For as soon as he feels solid ground under his feet, the murderer and avenger in him is aroused again, and he is once more ready to take his dagger in hand and make an end of her. Helen knows it; she knows everything that is going on in his mind. This is her strength; it is what enables her to remain mistress of the situation; otherwise she would not be Helen. Going to the mirror, she

arranges her hair; and as a table stands there beautifully set, and with two chairs—as though in readiness for a king and queen—she invites her husband to be seated and to join her at supper.”

“And Menelaus?”

“For nine days and nine nights—as long as they have been on the way from Troy—he has neither taken a meal with her nor so much as touched her with his finger-tip. For nine days he has been trying to decide whether to kill her on the ship or to sacrifice her the day after reaching Sparta. For he knows that she must die—at his hand—and by this same curving dagger with which he has cut the throat of Paris. And she also knows it—as she knows that he loves her to despair, but that he must act regardless of his love. This knowledge and understanding of the man she loves (and she loves the man to whom she belongs, so long as she is his)—this constitutes, as I have said, her strength. Besides, Aithra is present.”

“How can Aithra save her from this predicament?”

“By a stratagem. Menelaus is in a state near to madness. He can no longer bear up under his experiences of the last nine days. He is deranged by the proximity of his wife, the sense of having her again in his possession, and the unavoidable necessity of slaying her with his own hand. And a little ruse of Aithra’s serves to make his distraction complete. It occurs to her to summon her elves, lemur-like semi-human creatures, more malicious than kindly, crouched outside in the moonlight on the rocks of the beach. She directs them to contrive something to bewilder Menelaus, for the time being at least, since the dagger is drawn and everything will depend upon the next moment. The elves are quick and expert, they raise a savage, warlike din, and Menelaus imagines that he is again hearing the Trojan signals and the clatter of Trojan armour. He clearly distinguishes the voice of Paris challenging him to combat. His exhausted brain can no longer resist this bit of magic and he rushes out, to slay Paris again—or, if it is a ghost, to strangle the ghost. The two women, the mistress of the house and her guest, are alone. After a few words, they understand each other. Aithra has a wondrous potion, an exceptional sedative made of lotos, which induces forgetfulness. Helen drinks, becomes quiet as a child; under the calming touch of her friend, lifts like a half-wilted rose put in water. She has all but forgotten what awaits her, when her husband returns with the dagger. But Aithra has

presence of mind enough for both. She tells her maids to lead Helen away to rest in her own bed; then turning, and with profound calm, she confronts Menelaus. For he has come storming in, brandishing the dagger which, to his eyes, drips blood (though we see that the blade is clean and dry); for while he was gone he stabbed in the back two spectres which he mistook for Helen and Paris. He cannot explain how Paris should, after dying, have returned to embrace the living Helen; he cannot make such things fit together logically. He is no madman, but is in that state of confusion observed in hospitals during the war, among men who had gone through too terrifying a strain. On the other hand he is not so beside himself that he would fail of respect towards the young lady who now stands before him and in whose home he evidently is—the less, that she addresses him by his title, King of Sparta, and begs him to sit down. Aithra now tells him a fairy-story which, with feminine tact, she adapts to his present state of mind, the mood of a distracted man who no longer trusts his senses and reason, and to whom almost anything seems possible, imagining as he does that he has himself committed the most frightful and impossible act. For ten years, she tells him, he was the victim of a phantom which he carried from the burning city that night of the conflagration—a ghost for which thousands of Greeks have died, which he bore about his neck out of the sea, and which he has just now seemed to stab. At the same time she pours for him some of the potion which calms the nerves and lulls the consciousness into a gentle, rhythmic state of dream. Then she begs him not to speak too loud lest he disturb the beautiful woman now asleep on her bed in the next room. . . .”

“What beautiful woman?”

“None other than his wife, his own Helen, the real Helen (again she extends to him the goblet of lotos juice) that only Helen, she whom the gods stole away ten years ago. ‘In sleep she was borne across the sea to us here in Egypt, to the castle of my father. She has spent the years sheltered, half slumbering, never aging, with ever that same smile on her lips. She thinks that she has fallen asleep in your arms; but soon, soon, she will awake. Prepare!’”

“Suddenly the adjoining room is brilliant with light, a curtain divides, on a broad couch Helen is just opening her eyes, refreshed by sleep, younger and more beautiful than ever—as fair as on her

wedding-day. How could a heart self-tormented like Menelaus', resist this wealth of un hoped-for happiness? Across the darkened mirror of his mind flits a fear that it may be the spectre of his wife, long dead and now conjured up by a witch and necromancer. But misgiving succumbs to the brilliance of the vision; the potion is working in his veins: a gentle forgetfulness of horror and suffering, an inner harmony, an unutterable peace. He approaches the lovely creature; she inclines toward him, her head touches him; it is she, Helen of Sparta—knowing naught of Paris. Their voices mingle, and the clear voice of Aithra adds itself."

"The play is over then? What is there left to happen in the second act?"

"It could be; a frivolous little comedy in that case, in which a husband, after frightful adventures, is duped by two women. But these characters were not so meant. Do you think so? This Menelaus and this Helen did not look as though this were the end?"

"No—but how?"

"Nor are the elves of the opinion that the play could end there. These elves are always present as an invisible chorus; they see it all as drama, and this conclusion is too mild for them. They are not willing that any one should come out of the business so cheaply. Invisibly but audibly, they jeer at the plot. 'Never!' they hiss. 'Not so easily!'"

"And the second act takes place, I suspect, the following morning?"

"Yes, but not in the house of Aithra."

"Not there?"

"A long distance from there, in the wilderness, not far from Mount Atlas. Towards the end of the first act Helen asks Aithra in a whisper, if she could translate her and Menelaus to a region where not even the name of Helen has been heard, or any rumour of the Trojan war. She craves solitude that she may enjoy the felicity she has so perilously regained—safe from notoriety. And Aithra says: 'Nothing could be easier. When you are both fast asleep I shall lay my magic cloak over you and it will bear you to a place where you will be quite alone.' But the whispered conversation has not been heard by Menelaus. So they wake in solitude, in a beautiful palm-grove at the foot of Mount Atlas. I shall not go into detail about the second act, but give only the main points. They are not long in solitude. As nowadays, nomadic,

knightly chiefs range the desert and one of these, with his son and retinue, chances upon the two strangers. And though her name is unknown, the most beautiful woman thus finds herself in a situation identical with that at home: both father and son fall in love, want to snatch her from Menelaus, and are prepared to kill each other for her. But this is a detail. I am coming to the heart of the matter—namely, Helen. The strength of this woman, her genius, lies in the fact that she must wholly possess the man to whom she belongs. The apparently successful ruse, however, has restored to her but half of Menelaus or less than half. He regards her, after the night of love, with uneasiness; he is really afraid of her. He is engrossed with the thought of the woman whom he thinks dead, the woman who has caused him so much grief, for whom he has suffered nights of horror, for whom he has slain Paris—and whom, that last evening on the island, he murdered with the same frightful weapon, his curved dagger. For in his confusion he still believes that he killed the real, the guilty Helen—and that this other, so young and innocent-looking, this mirage, this Egyptian siren of air, has been given him by the enchantress as solace. But he is Menelaus of Troy, the widower, the murderer of Helen. She is everything to him, he is bound to her by a world of guilt and suffering; and the beautiful siren before him is nothing."

"And Helen?"

"Understands him once again, knows him more profoundly than he knows himself, and makes a decision."

"What?"

"She resolves to awake him, as from a trance, and to rid him of his illusion, that he may recognize her as the guilty one he must punish. She will, that is to say, reconstruct the situation of the previous evening."

"And does she?"

"She succeeds in everything she turns her mind to. She has a demonic power. And Aithra coming to her assistance, provides, as Helen wishes, a potion to counteract the potion of forgetfulness. Helen approaches and places herself beneath the drawn dagger, sure that Menelaus will kill her, and smiles at dagger and murderer, in the exact posture of twelve hours ago on the island."

"And he?"

"At last he has come to recognize her, to recognize her fully,

at that last moment—and letting go the dagger, falls into her arms."

"It is an opera—for me, at any rate, if not for others. And what a part for Jeritza! You haven't mentioned it to any one? It is besides, astonishingly modern. Have you never thought of making a prose play of it?"

"Yes, I feel myself that beneath the hand of a French or American author it would become a society drama. By slight changes the mythical elements could be eliminated. And the bits of magic—the potion, the forgetfulness and restoring of memory—are mere short-cuts abridging mental processes. The elves stand for the subconscious censor. All this could have been dialectic; and so have become standard psychological society drama: marriage as problem, beauty as problem, a tangle of problems."

"Well?"

"I don't like very well dialectic motivation in drama and doubt that purposive speech can convey the dramatic. Words can ruin our best effects and I am wary of them."

"Yet a poet can give his characters life only by making them speak. Words are to him what tones are to me, and colours to a painter."

"Words, yes—but not purposive, deliberately schematized speech. Not what is called the art of dialogue, or psychological dialogue, which seems to have stood in such high repute from Hebbel to Ibsen and further still—and in Euripides—and also in Shaw, though as here tempered by a predilection for wit, it neutralizes the dialectic quality of the dialogue."

"And in Shakespeare?"

"Not a trace! For him speech is expression, never information. In this sense Shakespeare wrote pure opera; he is wholly with Aeschylus and miles from Euripides. But has it never occurred to you that in life nothing ever is decided by talking? We are never so alone, never so convinced of the hopelessness of a situation, as when we have been trying to help it with words. The deceptive power of speech is so great that it not only distorts, but even dissolves, the character of the speaker. Dialectic forces the ego out of existence. A writer has, I insist, the choice of creating conversation or character!"

"A little paradoxical for me! For the playwright has no medium but speech."

"Yet, there are other resources; most mysterious, most precious, least known—and the only effective ones. He can do anything when he has given up the idea that his characters should substantiate their existence by direct communication."

"What medium is that?"

"By the turns of the plot he can convey without informing. He can make something live in the audience without the audience's suspecting how this has come about. He can make people feel the complexity of the apparently simple, the identity of the seemingly disparate. He can show how a woman becomes a goddess, how something living emerges as something dead—he can give a premonition of the vast agglomerate which the mask of the ego transforms into a human being. Thus the Ancients designated both mask and person by the same word. He can convert the reticent into the eloquent, make what is far distant, near. He can allow his characters to exceed themselves and become gigantic, for mortals do this on signal occasions. But there is no room for such things in a 'naturally' conducted dialogue. 'Realism' is projecting elusive experience upon an arbitrarily chosen social plane. Human nature, its cosmic influences and its encompassing of time and space, cannot be captured by realistic means."

"But what kind of medium is this? Will you not define it?"

"By developing the plot, complicating the motive, giving voice to the hidden, and allowing things once uttered to disappear again—through similarities of character, analogies of situation, intonation which often says more than words."

"But that is my—that is certainly the medium of the musician!"

"It is the medium of lyric drama, and the only one, it seems to me, through which the atmosphere of our time can be expressed. For the present is, if anything, mythical. I know of no other term for a reality which is being enacted before such wide horizons, for our place among the centuries, for this confluence of Orient and Occident within our ego, for the vast internal breadth, the frantic inner tensions, the Here and Elsewhere, which characterize contemporary life. It is not possible to capture such things in clumsy dialogue. Mythological opera is, you may be sure, of all forms the most authentic."

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL

BOOK REVIEWS

A GOLDEN BOOK

THE GOLDEN BOOK: The Story of Fine Books and Bookmaking Past and Present. By Douglas C. McMurtrie. 4to. 406 pages. Pascal Covici. \$6.

IT probably does not fall to the lot of everybody to come into possession of one of the dummy books, bound in buckram or something of that sort to the exact format of a proposed edition, and filled with the exact number of pages of the intended paper but quite unprinted, which publishers occasionally construct for this or that object. The businesslike possessor very likely uses them as convenient memorandum books, albums, or the like: a more fanciful one, unless or until he finds some special opportunity of that kind, may keep them as suggesters of fancy in its proper variety. In that case some of the variations would certainly include the origin and history of what we have now for nearly five hundred years understood by "a book"—a thing of which the supposed dummy presents the simplest and most generalized form.

To such a person, as contrast at once and suggester of additions, nothing could be a better companion than Mr Douglas McMurtrie's not too proudly named "Golden Book"—a comely small quarto of some four hundred pages, agreeably bound, beautifully printed, lavishly illustrated in its own special kind and subject, and quite remarkably cheap, with absolutely nothing of the nastiness which sometimes at least proverbially accompanies cheapness.

It is indeed difficult to find anything but praise for Mr McMurtrie's work. It conducts the history of printing and bookmaking in the literal and not invidious sense of the term, if not from China to Peru from China to London and New York. It handles contested points—such as the never to be finished case of Coster v. Gutenberg as inventor—with good information and in good temper. Very few people except those who are already spe-

cialists will read it without profit: while it may without ill nature be suspected that in regard to a subject with so many parts not every specialist in one or more of them is also a specialist in every other. Here you may go from "pictographic" writing (a form of early art not always beautiful in itself but at its worst hardly deserving such a very ugly hybrid ticket) to wood-pulp paper and you may learn something of the biography of famous printers, especially those who have had to do with English from William Caxton to William Morris. Oddments of all sorts crop up—for instance an account of early printing in, of all places in the world, Mexico. The actual processes of typesetting, printing, and binding are not left undescribed and the whole is done with a singular absence (or rather a double one) of undue heaviness on the one hand and superfluous lightness on the other.

It must however be admitted that in all probability—except to persons of unusual virtue and less than usual (if it may be said without flippancy) power of enjoyment—the principal charm of the book will lie in its abundant illustrations—mostly full page and dealing with the work of artists from Egyptian scribes somewhere about four thousand years before the Christian era to Mr Bruce Rogers, typographer to both the Cambridges in the twentieth century after it. One supposes that as there is said to be no sort of beauty that is universally acceptable to the human race, there must be people who do not see much if they see any, difference between an ugly page (provided the printing be not mere "pie") and a fine one: but fortunately there are also some who do. The source of the beauty they perceive is not mere ornament though ornament—suitable ornament—may add to it, while "illustrations" proper are of course even more additional. Printing is a kind of architecture: and as in other architecture proportion is the great secret, though there may be others of which colour is certainly one.

This delight of proportion which is in itself rather multiform, arising from size and shape of type, attitude of page to margin, spacings, and other things, only comes to perfection when we reach the Renaissance. The early Chinese blockprinted things possess it in a way but it is the way of drawing and painting rather than that of architecture, though a very agreeable Chinese Charm given here (opposite p. 48) is decidedly architectural. But of course the mere printing even with separate types of the innumerable lan-

guage-characters of Chinese in columns gave little opportunity. They might be terrible as an army but they wanted some sort of banners to make them beautiful. Whether we got printing in Europe through playing-cards or not there is very little doubt that at first the picture was the principal thing and the letter-press quite subordinate, as you may see in the St Christopher woodcut of 1423 also handsomely reproduced here. But that, even before the block gave way to movable type, text could be well separated from picture and occupy an independent page, you may further see from a page opening of the famous *Biblia Pauperum*. And the page though of course black letter, is a very good page—the lines perhaps a little too closely spaced for the size of the individual letter, but not much.

As may have been hinted above the Gutenberg-Coster fight, even if you bring into it the otherwise immortal name of Fust and others still may perhaps not interest some readers so much as, though it may interest others more than, the rare devices which they devised. It is a pity that black letter is so dazzling to some eyes even those that have not passed their grand climacteric, and to most that have: for though thus treacherous it has, like some other dazzling but treacherous things, considerable attractions of its own. The great "42-line" Bible of 1456 has a gorgeous appearance, though it may prick the eyes and is almost severe in comparison with the Psalter of next year with its far bigger type of a splendid design and its elaborate initialing. Some time later comes an example of almost fully romanized letter from the Subiaco Lactantius which may call up in some minds the pleasant picture in *The Cloister* and the *Hearth* of Sweynheim and Pannartz at their work, and which presents the first example of Greek type printed—a matter again for thoughts to people who can and care to think. And then we come to a multitude of interesting things not capable of being sampled here to any but the smallest extent. Such are our own beginnings in England; the larger interspersions of woodcuts in text; Aldus and the Venetians; all manner of delightful matter generously illustrated. "*The Study of Incunabula*" which very properly has a chapter to itself must in that self elude us for lack of space. If a humble reviewer may be permitted the expression of his personal taste I should say that the most beautiful printing of any age known to me is that of the middle of the French six-

teenth century connected with the names—as type-designers, wood-engravers, and printers—of Geofroy Tory, Garamond, Colines, Estienne, and others. For a plain page the instance given here at p. 173, for bordered ones the two at pp. 184-5 are incomparable.

But others may like others better and ten times the present space would not suffice for the whole. Caxton and Baskerville and Morris—there is a trio that will take some beating from any other country. The history of the Printing Press in the United States before the quarrel is certainly not interesting to Americans only, or only for the fact—though that is interesting enough—that not the least important person at the time of that quarrel was a man very much “in the printing line” (as literature and everything connected with it was once described by a Cambridgeshire villager) and was content after all his multifarious employments to call himself in his will, “Benjamin Franklin, Printer.”

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

MR FRY'S FLEMISH ART

FLEMISH ART, A Critical Survey. By Roger Fry.
Illustrated. 8vo. 55 pages. Brentano's. \$3.50.

AS MIGHT be anticipated by those familiar with the contained competence of Mr Fry's discourses, his lecture, now printed, on the exhibition of Flemish art at Burlington House (1926-7) is selective both in what is discussed, and in the discussion as such. The exhibition had a great popular success, due at least partly, he suggests, to the superlative fidelities of the Flemish picturing. With the glitter of painted jewels and sheen of brocades, however, Mr Fry has no concern. He is interested to consider in Flemish art the subtler poetries of appearance (where they have been achieved), those discernments, both deeper and more abstract than anything imitation accomplishes, which belong to disinterested vision and to it alone. Such preoccupations as this, doubtless, more than the requirements of brevity in a lecture, more than the fact that their pictures may not all have been included in the exhibition, have led him to omit discussion of such figures as Gerard David, Patinir, Dierck Bouts, Hugo van der Goes; and to condense his version of such others as Pol de Limbourg and Hans Memling. With the time and room so gained he can enlarge upon matters of more developed moment, upon the language of lines, planes, and volumes, and so far as he may, upon the clue which that language is to the imaginative and intellectual force of those using it.

Thus in his consideration of the Van Eycks he is less concerned with the supremacy of John's rendering of literal fact than with Hubert's command of composition, and the instrument it is in the hand of a great poetic originality. With Rogier van der Weyden the traits remarked are the artist's means of expressing his devotionism—his capacity to set forth dramatic ideas through linear rhythm and disposition of pictorial masses. Hans Memling is rather briefly dismissed for a defective sense of plastic values, while the clear space realizations of Petrus Christus receive several paragraphs. Among the Italianate Flemings Quentin Metsys is amply examined for the pictorial organization he achieves in his use of the

"atmospheric envelope." And though by Mr Fry considered an illustrator of tragi-comedy rather than the melodist of form and colour which a painter should be, Pieter Brueghel is still noticed at length for the clarity and sharpness of his expression of psychological realities. Finally, with the sumptuous and sonorous Rubens it is lucidity of organization, rhythmic sweep of utterance, depth and power of tone that receive comment—temperate comment indeed if one recall here the lyric rhetoric of M Faure. These matters are technical, perhaps too technical if the more ultimate prospects of criticism are to be attained. Yet the character and power of the artist, it would seem, are not manifest apart from their objects and means of effect, are not discovered except through examination of the modes and achievements of his expression, if in fact in that way.

When such points as these have been reached and occupied, the strictly aesthetic standpoint, no matter how mature and lucid, becomes somewhat unsatisfactory. Mr Fry has dwelt so much for its own sake and so well on the pictorial language and its various absorbing developments in Flemish painting, that he has tended to neglect the artistic personalities to which that language might critically be taken as the clue. They are mentioned indeed—perhaps as much as would be possible in so condensed a review—but mentioned as the background, so to say, of their works. Thus it is that the critic's very accomplishment in technical matters plays into the hand of lecture requirements, and tends to interrupt the further quest. The more effectively the potentialities of the aesthetic point of view are exhibited, the more obvious becomes the fact on the one hand that the aesthetic types of thought have capacities of significance beyond their own immediate sphere, and on the other that the aesthetic standpoint is at its best when taken up into more inclusive points of view—the more obvious it is, in brief, that the tale of criticism does not end in aesthetics. This is not to suggest that Mr Fry particularly is at fault. The defect, it would seem, is in criticism at large. Mr Fry's broad and admirable aesthetism merely makes the psychological deficiencies of our general critical armoury the more apparent.

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

SONS OF LEARNING

IRELAND AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF EUROPE. By
*Benedict Fitzpatrick. 8vo. 451 pages. Funk and
Wagnalls. \$4.*

WHEN Gil Blas, on the road to Salamanca, engaged in altercations with fellows to whom disputes never came amiss, he was meeting in those clans of Irish the last representatives of a learned exodus. It had begun with Columbanus in the Merovingian age. Benedict Fitzpatrick's *Ireland and the Foundations of Europe*, gives us a great deal of information about these wandering and pious professors whose work for the rehabilitation of European culture has been given so little notice in the text-books that the ordinary reader is familiar with. The book is informative and the chapter on Johannes Scotus Erigena is valuable: one can never get over one's amazement at finding such ripe scholarship, such sound judgement as Erigena showed in those blind times. But Mr Fitzpatrick's book is uncritical, and it is spoiled on too many pages by a perfervid nationalism. What good does it do to rate the Irish teachers so far above the Saxons? The Saxons possessed their Alcuin who was certainly the equal of any Irishman of his time. And Mr Fitzpatrick fails to acknowledge the fact that the impulse which eventuated in the Irish missionary activity was due to a Romanized Briton in exile amongst them—Saint Patrick. He fails to take into account the possibility that the exodus of learned men from Ireland might have been due, not to the heightened culture of the country, but to a great gap that existed between the intellectuals and the ruling classes and the people under them. That possibility forces itself to be considered when one reads such a tract as *The Vision of St Adamnan*—St Adamnan stayed in Ireland and wrote about Irish affairs, and laboured to free women from conscription for war. The conditions that he describes towards the end of the seventh century might well be given as a background for Ireland and the Foundations of Europe.

WALTER MENNLOCH

POETIC ENFRANCHISEMENT

CITIES OF THE PLAIN. By Marcel Proust. Translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. Two volumes. 12mo. 352 and 384 pages. Albert & Charles Boni. \$15.

WITHOUT our knowledge or concurrence we are, each one of us, a little closed system of preconceptions, our imaginations hobbled by custom, our thoughts as sedately guarded, as carefully regulated, as those long lines of pale orphans in their black uniforms led out for their daily walk by the unsmiling head of the establishment. Our illusions, so sedulously garnered, so anxiously cherished, so bitterly defended, are the props by which we live; habit, the prison through which we move; fear, the sentinel that foils us in our endeavour to issue into a universe too vast and frightening for our uncertain nerves.

It is the privilege of great and original minds to let down for us those bars held in place by the unconscious conspiracy of a timorous and torpid society, and to guide us with firm directions into a more audacious view of existence; it is the greater privilege of the artist, not only to heighten our vision of that reality beyond reality, the truths which lurk so fugitively under the ordinary accepted aspects of the objects surrounding us, but to charm and fructify us at the same time, to rouse our own dormant potentialities, to force us into creative thought, to render us more aware of the implications of our own lives, to indicate the greatest disaster that can befall us, apart from disease, destitution, or death, namely, that of losing our capacity for fresh and penetrating response. This no author has done to a more marked degree than has Marcel Proust. Open any of his volumes at random, and you are led on from sentence to sentence, from page to page, from chapter to chapter, until stirring within you is a new power, a more bold and delicate insight, a whole fresh set of interests and appreciations, and at last an entire world of people takes sensible shape, a world more vivid, more intimately realized, more interesting, than any you have known or will probably ever be privileged to know. This, to a certain extent, might be said of any novelist, of Henry James to whom Proust has by an authoritative English critic, been un-

favourably compared. But how restricted, how narrowly genteel, how lacking in humour, is *this* master of the social situation, rare as his gift to us will always remain, compared to the unfettered perspicacity of the disillusioned Frenchman. And of the two it is certainly not Marcel Proust whom one can accuse of snobbishness. Only the most obtuse of critics could have started such a rumour. He has chosen to portray that portion of society which, since it is the most aristocratic, is also the most historically interesting, in which more diverse and complicated types sooner or later appear, and where the assumption of superiority being greater and the play of wit more fierce and more light, the challenge to discrimination is proportionately more exigent. But he has, at the same time, parallel with this privileged upper world, depicted with an insight heretofore unequalled the world that serves it, that must bow down to its whims—the valets, the cooks, the bell-boys, the coachmen—a world made up of the same types as its masters, as arrogant and as limited, but rendered servile, cunning, and affable through necessity.

In these last of his volumes to be translated, alternating with the themes already familiar to us in his previous writing—the tortures of normal attraction with its unrelenting doubts, its ennui and its sudden rewards, all so fleeting and all so important; the outward pretentiousness and the malicious undercurrents of a small, homogeneous group; the delicious sensations of the country; the changing aspects of the sea—is the major motif of a love heretofore banished from the pages of fiction. By society at large sexual inversion has been regarded either as a vice so revolting and unnatural that a conspiracy of silence has prevailed, or so dangerous that it must receive immediate public castigation. Since the newer psychology has explained it in terms of a malady, another attitude has among the enlightened come into fashion, but even this attitude, so supercilious in its tolerance or so vulgar in its frivolity, veils a contempt which betrays a sense of superiority and a limited sympathy. No writer before Marcel Proust has dared, or has perhaps been permitted, to touch with so free a pen on so dark a subject. We can imagine no author who could have possibly done it with so relentless yet so tender an understanding, with such consummate art. And be it said, we are not among those who discover a "defect" in his "moral sensibility" because of the inclusion of certain much discussed episodes. Candour absolves everything, and for the artist curiosity, combined with spiritual detach-

ment, is essential. Sensitiveness is the unique virtue, and the passionate weight of certain pages of this profound and revealing book should cause hesitation to those who judge certain other passages with too great temper. As alert to the conflicts of his characters, to their sufferings, their pitiable subterfuges, the nervous masks through which their telltale eyes look out, as a lover to the steps of his mistress, Proust can never be accused of moral insensibility.

To follow the possessed divagations of the Baron de Charlus, the sly, self-interested deceptions of Morel, is to be initiated into a life as fantastic as it is absorbing. Tragedy and comedy alternate with so swift and so equal a balance, and our shocks are so softened by our increasing perceptions, that presently our dispraise dissolves, and only our understanding remains, our instructed and compassionate understanding. Moral indignation has no place where the instincts are seen striving, with the desperate zeal of necessity, to create within the small space allotted them by a withered or frightened society the very breath of life itself.

To blame or criticize Marcel Proust because his philosophy is one of despair is to miss much of the intensity of his writing. Because he never forgets death he equally never forgets life. Unlike Leopardi, "*pâle amant de la mort*," Proust seeks to extract from life each little drop of experience it has to give, to bathe himself in it; he does not court death, he covets life, but at the same time sees it, like the wild ass's skin, shrinking hour by hour. His descriptions of nature are like those of a convalescent returning to the strange and overpowering revelation of an existence which only one who realizes its dreamlike quality, its fleeting duration, is able to achieve. It is largely the secret of his rich, rash, and subtle meditations, this constant accompaniment in his mind of the knowledge that suddenly each sense, so swift to his bidding, so perfect an instrument of ravishment, will be blotted out, extinguished, and darkness will prevail. It is why his observations of the ephemeral niceties of an artificial society, its colossal illusions, its sentimentalities, and its crudeness, are so acute. All is nothing and therefore anything is everything. That he withdrew from life was due to his illness and it was only because he had lived with so submissive and dedicated an attention to the minutest measurement of experience that he was able to build with his art so splendid and so enduring an edifice.

ALYSE GREGORY.

MR LEWIS AND THE TIME-BEAST

TIME AND WESTERN MAN. By Wyndham Lewis.
8vo. 469 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$5.

MR WYNDHAM LEWIS is a kind of jack-of-all-trades. He was one of the founders of Blast, that singular, and now so old-fashioned, organ of the cult known as Vorticism; for a time one associated him with Marinetti, with futurism, with concerts in which cannons were fired or guinea-pigs compelled to squeal, and with paintings which resembled rather minor and obscure explosions among bric-à-brac. That he had a vigorous and individual mind was evident enough; and that he could draw was admirably attested by occasional exhibitions of his work at the Leicester Galleries in London. Some of these—notably those drawings in which he was least doctrinaire—were characterized by a singular delicacy and purity, a quality which one might suggest by saying that it was a blending of the feminine and the mathematical. In fiction, he has now produced a novel and a book of short stories,¹ both of them energetic and original, both of them somewhat marred by his passion for dogma, his love of controversy, or, in short, by his spleen. In the realm of controversy itself, he has been increasingly a kind of angry sharpshooter of his generation. In this regard, he has somewhat resembled Mr Ezra Pound, with whom he was early associated; but the resemblance has been (if one may put it so) antithetical. Mr Pound's love of new "movements," and of being in the forefront of aesthetic battle, is well known. He has been one of the most striking *entrepreneurs* of our time: a brilliant, if occasionally misguided, leader of rebellions. Mr Lewis, on the other hand, if he has shared with Mr Pound this passion for novelty and for positions conspicuously dangerous, has differed from him in his emotional reason for doing so. For whereas Mr Pound has always been what he himself has described as a "broken bundle of mirrors," a sort of reflector of this and that and the other, Mr Lewis has remained singularly and truculently himself. He

¹ The Wild Body. By Wyndham Lewis. 12mo. 298 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

has wanted to be there, in this advanced position, but for a purpose of his own. Sufficiently a prey to this herd-instinct, and to this *Zeitgeist*, to desire a part in its "show," he was nevertheless somewhat annoyed (or so one guessed) at his weakness in obeying so base a desire. He was, in short, an individualist who had, willy-nilly, been swept along with a crowd whose components he could not wholly admire.

Something of this division has shown itself in all of Mr Lewis' work. One always feels in his criticism that he is himself a sort of exasperated victim of the very things which, with so magnificent and vivid a gusto, he attacks. He has become a professional enemy: one almost feels, indeed, that at times he merely attacks because only in attack can he become reassuringly aware (by a kind of negative assumption) of his own identity. One does not go to him for that Greek or Chinese serenity which, in his new book, he claims to admire; hating the philosophy of the dynamic, he is nevertheless typically dynamic himself; at war with chaos, he adopts the language of chaos; desiring peace and assurance, and hungering for perfect *rest*, that perfect rest which only an almost religious conviction of the permanence and value of the ego can give, he contributes, in *Time and Western Man*, the most violent and confused and restless and peaceless of contemporary books of philosophy.

Mr Lewis' latest *bête noire* is the Time-doctrine of Spengler and Whitehead and Alexander, and of modern science in general. The present reviewer is not a metaphysician, and cannot presume, and does not particularly desire, to follow the argument in all its massive and chaotic detail. Suffice it to say that Mr Lewis hates the idea of flux and change and relativity; that he fears the consequences of such ideas; that he prefers the comparative calm and order which one may suck from the pure subjective idealism of Berkeley (a choice with which his reviewer is cheerfully but unexcitedly in sympathy); and that he attacks this latest time-ghost with an almost unexampled ferocity. Not only does he attack it with ferocity; he also, like a man obsessed, sees it everywhere. If we are to take Mr Lewis' word for it, this time-beast is devouring us. It animates the pages of Marcel Proust, it deadens the pages of Mr Joyce's *Ulysses*, it prattles in the person of Miss Loos's Lorelei, it stammers in the protracted and posed and iterative

longueurs of Miss Gertrude Stein, it even kicks its heels in the timed and timeless heels of Mr Chaplin. This is, to say the least, a singular collocation. Is one right in suspecting that Mr Lewis is so fixed on this notion that he has lost all sense of values? Is he merely, in this, following not so much a logical method as a method of which free association is the basis? At all events, the connexion becomes, at times, extremely attenuated; one suspects that there is no connexion at all, save in the emotional picture of our brilliant author. One is irresistibly reminded of Mr Rank's description of the habits of thought—or feeling, to be more precise—of the dementia-praecox, or schizophrenic, type of mind: of his suggestion that such people think in terms of "quality complexes," allowing the unguided mind to flow from image to image in obedience to feeling-associations. Thus, Miss Stein is clearly enough interested in the psychological idea of time; and she also prattles, iterates, stammers, is a kind of false-naïve child. We proceed therefor from the child-idea, and discover Miss Loos, who adopts the same pose, (in the person of her heroine) and assimilate her to the Stein-complex: and *ipso facto*, Miss Loos becomes a part of our idea about "time." From Miss Loos, it is only a step, or a frolic, to Mr Chaplin; and so on, and so on. And in the end, we have a kind of vague notion (extremely vague) that Mr Chaplin has something to do with Mr Spengler; which is very far from being the case.

Mr Lewis, in other words, is not to be trusted. He is brilliant, entertaining, fertile in suggestion, full of fine phrases, and bursting with energy; in the item, he is acute to the point of incandescence; he can knock on the head a Hegel or a James or a Heraclitus with as emphatic a maul as was ever wielded; but in the end one feels that he is a man obsessed, and blind to whole patterns. One begins to wonder what it is, in this harmless preoccupation of the present with the notion of time, which so upsets him. Is he terribly afraid of something? Is he afraid of flux? Is he afraid of the unknown? Why is he so insistent that the external world should be fixed? Why must he, like the mollusc, be so determined on a retreat into the positively apprehended of the ego? And will he carry this retreat further, or will he ultimately seek satisfaction in one of those grand orthodoxies, like the Church—where he can be absolved of all responsibilities, and simply *accept* a reality? . . .

The truth is, I suppose, that Mr Lewis is a dyed-in-the-wool romantic. He is part and parcel of his age; and while he attacks it, he is indelibly conditioned by it. Incapable of achieving the "long" view of man's place in the world, disquieted by scientific analysis, of whatever sort, horrified by the prevailing doctrine of change and flux (which is no newer than Heraclitus) and frightened by modern psychology, as much as by relativity or the quantum theory, he lashes out against everything that is not the quietism of the idealist. And nevertheless, there is nothing of the quietist in him: nothing whatever. Here is no Platonic serenity, but the gesticulatory vehemence of the dynamists whom he would depose; he is tainted, and deeply, with the excitements, the fashions and fads, of his age; too much himself a victim of the Time-beast, he is therefor largely a reactionist to the moment; he lacks the calm independence (?) of the scientist, on the one hand, and the poet on the other.

CONRAD AIKEN

BRIEFER MENTION

THE UGLY DUCHESS, by Lion Feuchtwanger, translated from the German by Willa and Edwin Muir (8vo, 335 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) carries one forward from one climax to another with such biting and relentless intensity that the mind—unaccustomed to such velocity and impact—tingles as though exposed to a current of electricity. Perhaps the most conclusive proof of the high attainment which marks Feuchtwanger's second novel to be translated is that it evokes comparison with his first rather than with the work of any one else. Here the glamour of mediaeval times and the sinister plotting of ambitious princes are painted in full colours, while in the foreground stands the rocklike figure of Margarete of Tyrol like some strange creature half mythological, half modern.

THE WOMAN WHO RODE AWAY, by D. H. Lawrence (12mo, 307 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). Mr Lawrence reduces all humanity to Adam and Eve and studies them in the nude. Not a hint of a fig-leaf, though the stories date distinctly from "after the fall"! Lords and ladies, bootblacks and kitchen-maids are, at bottom, just Adams and Eves. Nudity is undoubtedly interesting to a perhaps over-dressed populace. A naked man can have a *succès fou* on any city street but in the end too much nudity, like too much of anything else, surfeits. Readers, even sympathetic ones, now begin to smile when Mr Lawrence's characters undress. However, this writer's gifts are undeniable. He enchains the attention instantly with his vivid dialogues and still more vivid landscapes, and if, as Mr E. M. Forster says, his moral lessons are sometimes obscure, they are, at least, never dull. He is certainly in the first flight of contemporary story-tellers.

THAT BRIGHT HEAT, by George O'Neil (12mo, 303 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). "But I ask you, Henri"—it is Mr O'Neil's hero speaking—"could you really believe in this patching together of uncomprehended fragments—this meaningless experience that goes on perpetually? Henri, Life is unspeakably forlorn. Here in this sunlight burning fertility into the earth, drowning us in radiance, we're cold, in the dark." "Rot!" Henri said dryly. Mr O'Neil's novel—like his hero—is too impetuous to be quite credible. He tosses everything he can lay hands upon into the furnace of his fancy, and what one is chiefly conscious of is the glare. What remains is a sharply etched impression of life in St Louis in the 'eighties, and here the author has composed his materials with a deft and admirable skill.

POEMS, by Clinch Calkins (10mo, 69 pages; Knopf: \$2). Although a voluptuous defiance, pontifical not discursive, weights them and hauteur sometimes pervades too unhaughty a fabric, these poems are poems. Truthness to key, resilient verbal antitheses, "small birds swinging aloft on the precarious leaf" are here, and other small things that in poetics are not small.

THE BRIGHT DOOM, by John Hall Wheelock (12mo, 80 pages; Scribner's: \$2). Too often the poet's sharp vision is blunted with rhetoric, his ecstasy lost in a fog of pantheism, his dream reduced to an extended metaphor too crowded with abstractions: Life, Love, Time, the "old wonder," "The lust and hunger of the centuries." In the first poem, however, and in a few of the others, his emotion leads him to heights of eloquence which our poets rarely attain.

COLOR OF WATER, by Marjorie Meeker (12mo, 61 pages; Brentano's: \$1.50) ripples over the smooth stones of imagery with a murmur of melancholy. The poet sits in the twilight "spinning silver unquiet trickery." "Silver" and "unquiet" and "harsh" and "unfaith" are her favourite words, and she fits them into the pattern of her verse with so little discrimination that they inevitably lose precision—a minor flaw in what is otherwise authentic expression of poetic feeling.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1927, edited by L. A. G. Strong (16mo, 259 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2). Their editor must be given high praise for this fascinating selection. The underlying test which has been drastically applied to the immense mass of last year's verse in England and America seems simply to have been *interest*. Hardly a dull page in the book!

SIXTHTE, Translations from the French Symbolists, by Dorothy Martin, with preface by L. C. Martin (8vo, 99 pages; The Scholartis Press: 10/6). As aware as Dr Johnson that poetry cannot be translated, Miss Martin nevertheless ventures to put De Nerval, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, and Laforgue into English. She merely hopes to initiate certain mystified foreigners into the cult. This ought to be disarming; but will it be? No. There will be fierce critics to pounce on any particular rendering, such as, "Sunset and dawn within your eyes are fair," for Baudelaire's "*Tu contiens dans ton oeil le couchant et l'aurore*," and declare it terrible. But Miss Martin does often get astonishingly near to the rhythm of these French geniuses; erring, when she does err, on the side of over-clarity and over-reasonableness. The accompanying essays on the poets are admirable and will entice when the translations do not.

FIVE RESTORATION TRAGEDIES, edited by Bonamy Dobree (16mo, 450 pages; The World's Classics, Oxford University Press: 80 cents).

"Oh Pierre! thou art welcome!

Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st

Lovely dreadfull, and the Fate of Venice

Seems on thy Sword already."

So speaks the tragic muse of Otway. Is it not an ornate language? Though it be Racine-gone-to-seed with a vengeance, it will surprise certain young people, no doubt, to discover we have ever been so formal in English. For that reason they should try Otway, or better yet Dryden, who is also included in the little volume, as a corrective against the opinion that Pepys was the whole of the Restoration. Dryden, of course, is immeasurably above Otway. You will find no "lovely dreadfull" phrases in *his* plays!

THE PATRIOT, A Play by Alfred Neumann, adapted by Ashley Dukes, with introduction by Hendrik Willem Van Loon (12mo, 142 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) was one of the spectacular failures of the past theatrical season. The published version has two introductions which are interesting; but one who has seen the play gets nothing fresh from the text; and judges that a reader who has not seen the play will find it as difficult to follow as most historical plays are.

It is hard to read **THE PLAYS OF GEORG BÜCHNER** (12mo, 274 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) in spite of a spirited translation by Geoffrey Dunlop and in spite of Büchner's genuine intellectual gifts. He was an anti-romantic before his time; but there was chaos in him. Turning therefore to a known play, *Danton's Death*, one is pleased to find it much more consistent than Reinhardt's version of it as played last year—and equally dramatic.

FOUR PLAYS, by Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez Quintero (12mo, 260 pages; Little, Brown: \$2.50) have been translated by Helen and Harvey Granville-Barker. They are selected from the hundred and fifty plays written by these living Spaniards. They are "a simple picture of life in a little Andalusian town," a sentimental comedy, a picaresque farce "with a difference," and a comedy of the Andalusian "exiled to the harsher world of Madrid." Without knowing the originals, one is instantly taken with the charm of the translated language. As in *Anatol*, the language one reads has pungency and character, and the plays become attractive and have at least the air of being important. One should like to see them played—delicately.

If **CASTLES IN SPAIN AND OTHER SCREEDS**, by John Galsworthy (12mo, 262 pages; Scribner's: \$2) cannot take away, it surely cannot add much to the reputation of its author. These agreeable addresses and essays are not without the imaginative sense and urbane seriousness which one is accustomed to associate with Mr Galsworthy. Yet in turning through them the reader is brought soon to an impression that the volume which they compose is a rather random gather-all of incidentals of relative unimportance, about which he might be excused for appropriating the author's point of view with respect to Shelley, who would have been accounted far greater, Mr Galsworthy thinks, had he so selected his work that we should judge him only on the basis of a "picked tenth."

A LETTER TO A FRIEND, Anonymous (16mo, 115 pages; Open Court: \$1). To this personal record of religious experience, the student of life and religion could not be indifferent. It is perhaps irrelevant to admit that the literary method might not in itself be consoling to readers of perversely Ashmolean temper. The desire for spiritual equilibrium is universal, however, and many have doubtless verged upon the feeling expressed by the person to whom this Letter was written: "The gods put winds about our heads and hurdles before our feet, and our bodies and souls crack and break. What becomes of the pain in the heart, no one has offered to suggest."

LIFE AND I, An Autobiography of Humanity, by Gamaliel Bradford (8vo, 307 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3.50) is in the nature of a speculative offshoot of the author's biographical studies; its aim is neither metaphysical, didactic, nor theological, but simply to present certain phases of "the greatest dramatic struggle in the world, that between the I and the Not-I." Love and power and thought and beauty are the themes, and Mr Bradford's approach to them does not differ greatly from that of most of his readers. His analyses are cast in familiar moulds, and plainly labelled. One has the impression, on laying aside the book, of having made an interesting—though somewhat hurried—trip through a museum devoted to specimens of thought.

CONQUISTADOR, by Philip Guedalla (8vo, 276 pages; Harpers: \$3) brings the tempered edge of a flexible British mind against the spinning emery of American culture with exhilarating pyrotechnical effect. It is impossible to squeeze the fine flavour of this volume into a paragraph; even to lift a sample quotation would be quite as futile as to select a sample tulip in a Holland acre of them. To find that one's country can evoke—as a theme—such deft and incisive writing is, on the whole, rather reassuring to one's national pride. In place of that condescension which disturbed Lowell, Mr Guedalla views the American scene with tolerant good humour, civilized breadth, and now and then a note of genuine poetry. If these sentences imply that Conquistador possesses high merit, the impression is correct.

BIANCA CAPPELLO, by Clifford Bax (12mo, 168 pages; Representative Women Series, Viking Press: \$2). A Renaissance lady that the liberal-minded John Addington Symonds thought "infamous" is here set forth gayly, clearly, unblinkingly, approvingly. It is as nice an instance of "different times, different manners" as may be desired. In an age crazy for self-fulfilment it does not surprise to find Mr Bax gravely asserting Bianca Cappello, who merely had the gift for getting along, to be a genius. At that rate all the little chorus ladies of Broadway who marry Chicago millionaires are geniuses. Well, *THE DIAL*, which desires as heartily as any other publication, to be "in the period," will not dispute this matter. It might even confess that this biography reads like a flash and is fascinating enough to be true.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, by Milton Waldman (8vo, 255 pages; Harpers: \$4). Nothing in the sphere of a terse, condensed, popular biography could be more competently planned out than this desirable book. The balancing of difficult and confusing material is superb. The character-drawing, however, both in Raleigh's own case and in that of his overpowering contemporaries, is the crux of the undertaking; and here we feel that Mr Waldman is a good deal too rough-and-ready. Such clue-words as "pagan" and "puritan" are bandied about with less discrimination than the subject deserves. Such a sentence as "One frequently feels that Raleigh's life is a Greek tragedy which slipped a cog somewhere" will serve to indicate this hand-to-mouth psychologizing. Such clumsy generalizations do unfortunately a little weaken the thread of this sturdy, admirable narrative.

JACQUES COEUR: Merchant Prince of the Middle Ages, by Albert Boardman Kerr (10mo, 327 pages; Scribner's: \$3.50). The fourteenth century and the twentieth are not so far apart in these pages. There is something essentially modern in the life and enterprises of this French merchant, so much so that a thus belated adequate biography in English is quite inexplicable. Happily the task has fallen ultimately into competent hands. Mr Kerr's work reveals care and scholarship and—what is even more important—an assured grasp of historical perspective. One extracts from this biography not merely an acquaintance with its subject but also a lively comprehension of the world in which he lived.

THE OPINIONS OF ANATOLE FRANCE, by Nicolas Ségur, translated with introduction by J. Lewis May (8vo, 219 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$3). It certainly remains an irrefutable proof of Anatole France's vitality, that, like green shoots from a lopped trunk, these posthumous commentaries upon life should carry so much sap. As a lively protest against the brutalities of progress such playful aspersions upon the "Americanization" of the human spirit offer a salutary antidote to the reckless *liaison* between imagination and machinery which is one of the dominant "notes" of our time. The wilful Dadaists who danced on this sly old sage's grave will be infuriated afresh as they skim these unctuous-querulous pages. *Tant mieux!*

THE SEVEN STRINGS OF THE LYRE, The Romantic Life of George Sand, 1804-1876, by Elizabeth W. Schermerhorn (8vo, 327 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$4) is not perhaps, biography of a major sort. Yet it is an admirably careful and well-turned account of the commodiously romantic life of its great heroine. Possibly it will be found rather too contained. The reader, however, ought not to mistake sedateness for impercipientence. There are ironies here (as indeed there could not but be upon such rich occasions); yet they are ironies forborne—which are sufficiently rare phenomena in this sunken time, invaded as our biography too much is by the jibes of fashionably and cheaply malicious biographers.

MY JEANNE D'ARC, by Michael Monahan (10mo, 298 pages; Century: \$3) is a re-telling of the old story, done with reverence and rhetoric. Mr Monahan has gone deeply into the history and legends which cluster about the Maid of Orleans and has set forth his impressions with the fervour of a poet. Indeed he finds prose too halting for his purpose at times and relinquishes it in favour of verse. One may not read his book without partaking, in some degree, of his rhapsodic adoration.

THE INFLUENCE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE IN FRANCE, by Célestin Pierre Cambiaire, Ph.D. (8vo, 313 pages; Stechert: \$2.50). Dr Cambiaire certainly furnishes us with convincing evidence that Poe was an important influence in French literature. For students of this particular angle of French letters his book will be found valuable. For more general readers it is perhaps a little too overloaded with regimented scraps of information, scrupulously but unimaginatively collected, to prove a contention the interest of which is, after all, in its essence, academic.

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY, *A Critical Study*, by Barker Fairley (12mo, 256 pages; Oxford University Press: \$2.25). This tense, compact, vigorous little book is saturated with the crucial sap of the tough and difficult Doughty cult. With the exception of Blake's Prophetic Poems no English writer's harsh forbidding austerities are more significant than Doughty's. Into this primordial rock-cluttered world Mr Fairley passionately leads us. He shirks none of its stark stone-ledges. He discovers fresh water-pools where others would find only intolerable desolation. That his book is more convincing where he deals with Arabia Deserta than with his author's verse is natural enough. But although the reader's feeling for poetry is bound to be startled and perhaps staggered by much of Mr Fairley's enthusiasm, the general result is a suggestive and stimulating contribution to the growing body of Doughty interpretation.

THE AMERICAN AND THE GERMAN UNIVERSITY, by Charles Franklin Thwing (10mo, 238 pages; Macmillan: \$2.25) is academically competent as a survey, though somewhat colourless in its conclusions. So far as the effects of German methods on American scholarship are concerned, Dr Thwing hazards the belief that the "comprehensive result" has been "rich, noble, productive." "Yet," he says in the next breath, "one is inclined to ask whether this result has been quite so rich, quite so noble, quite so formative,—rich, noble, formative as it has proved to be,—as one had, and has, a right to expect?" The author's study lacks the clarity of conviction; it is almost too reticent to be important.

THE SEA AND THE JUNGLE, by H. M. Tomlinson, with introduction by Christopher Morley (16mo, 332 pages; The Modern Library: 95 cents) does not deteriorate; none of its beauty has evaporated and its pungent realism and tonic philosophy are as stimulating to-day as when first revealed. Not even the somewhat meagre margins dictated by pocket convenience can curb the sweep of Mr Tomlinson's sinewy prose—prose with the flash and fine edge and flexibility of tempered steel.

EUROPE, by Count Hermann Keyserling, translated from the German by Maurice Samuel (8vo, 393 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$5) is one of the most provocative books of the year. In spite of a personal assumption, incredibly pompous and ego-centric, there are so many exciting and penetrating generalizations in *Das Spektrum Europas*, that the reader, to whatever race he may belong, cannot but be roused, arrested, stimulated. Here may be found, as the great European cultures, one by one, are analysed, something of that bird's-eye world-view which, through quite different "spectra" we get in Valéry and in Spengler. The *bias*, on the whole, is philosophically aristocratic. The dangers to European civilization come equally, the writer thinks, from democratic America and communistic Russia. Neither the qualities of German nor of French psychology are ranked as the most essential in the creation of the author's European "Culture-Federation." This ideal rôle would, it seems, be best fulfilled by the instinctive aristocratic individualism of the Magyar, the Englishman, and the Turk.

COMMENT

So when Ptolemy, Alexander's Favourite was hurt with a poisoned dart in a fight, and lay in grievous pain sick of it; Alexander sitting by him fell asleep, and saw a Dragon which his Mother Olympias kept, carrying a little root in his mouth, and shewing the place where it grew, saying it was of such vertue that it would cure Ptolemy: Alexander being awake, told his dream, and sent to seek that root (for the place was not far off) which having found, it cured, not only Ptolemy, but many other Souldiers which were hurt with those kind of darts.

Richard Saunders

THOMAS HERIOT was pleased with the "greate hearbe in forme of a Marigolde, about sixe foote in height" which we have in America. "Some take it to bee *Planta Solis*," he says; "of the seeds herof they make both a kinde of bread and broth" and Nicholas Monardes published in his treatise on the medicinal uses of American plants, a picture of the sassafras tree, and its leaf, "used against all kinds of diseases."

In *The Divine Origin of the Craft of the Herbalist*¹ by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, there is much that is curious and important if one has an interest in magic, medicine, or the healing properties of herbs, "the unsatisfactory term magic" having been used originally to designate learning among Medes and Persians famed for their skill in working enchantments. Science is exonerated of credulity by the assertion that the herbalists' knowledge of medicine would have been greater but for their patients' "invincible love of magic" though the caduceus is retained symbolically, its serpents suggesting immortality in their power of shedding and renewing the skin. Sumerian, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian herbals are here shown to be the foundation of Greek herbals—disseminated also, by way of Arabic, through Asia, Turkestan, and China; and the antiquity of the craft, the nature of it, and the diversity of texts, are graphically suggested by prescriptions, plant lists, and plates,

¹ *The Divine Origin of the Craft of the Herbalist*. By Sir E. A. Wallis Budge. Illustrated. 8vo. 96 pages. Published at Culpepper House (London), by The Society of Herbalists. 5s.

among which last a typographic leopard from Ethiopia is particularly comely; the following Egyptian herbalist's formula against baldness being included: to mix together fat of the lion, fat of the hippopotamus, fat of the crocodile, fat of the cat, fat of the serpent, and fat of the Nubian ibex. Early magic has many counterparts. In the "facility of his reformation" by the garland of roses, Apuleius' metamorphosis into an ass delightfully illustrates the plausibility of magic:

"I took Fotis by the hand, . . . and said: 'I pray thee, . . . grant me some of this ointment . . . and I will ever hereafter be bound unto you by a mighty gift and obedient to your commandment, if you will but make that I be turned into a bird and stand, like Cupid with his wings, beside you my Venus.' . . . And then I put off all my garments and greedily thrust my hand into the box and took out a good deal of ointment, and after that I had well rubbed every part and member of my body, I hovered with mine arms, and moved myself, looking still when I should be changed into a bird . . . ; and behold neither feathers did burgeon out nor appearance of wings but verily my hair did turn into ruggedness and my tender skin wore tough and hard; my fingers and toes leaving the number five grew together into hooves, and from the end of my back grew a great tail, . . . and so without all help (viewing every part of my poor body) I perceived that I was no bird, but a plain ass."

As one is made aware by Sir Wallis Budge, herb doctor and magician have from the earliest times accompanied each other, and it is not surprising that Apuleius should have given us both the Golden Ass¹ and a Herbarium.

Herbs and magic belong characteristically also to the North American Indian, and in his use of them as in other primitive practice, the sinister cannot be said to have quite strangled the good. Chief Standing Bear has provided, in his autobiography,² a much

¹ The Golden Ass of Apuleius, Being the Metamorphoses of Lucius Apuleius. An English Translation by W. Adlington (1566): Revised 1915-1927. With an Essay by Charles Whibley. 8vo. 288 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$3.50.

² My People the Sioux. By Luther Standing Bear. Edited by E. A. Brininstool. With introduction by William S. Hart. Illustrated. 10mo. 288 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$4.

needed antidote to "white" superstition regarding "medicine," massacres, stealth, and various forms of "savage" diffidence. He admits certain superstitions, vicarious sacrifice by ordeal, and a tendency to retaliation, saying also without embarrassment, "The Spotted Tail Indians thought they would go after the Poncas. . . . They had no reason for bothering this tribe, but they just did not like them;" yet has imparted profound respect for primitive resourcefulness, loyalty, and domestic aestheticism. It is impossible not to be ashamed of our civilized ignorance in moving-picture and other representations of the Indian, for Chief Standing Bear finds that we prefer a pseudo-Indian life to the actual one and are indifferent when reasoned with. The conventionalized all-Greek living statuary of Ringling Brothers' On the War Path, and The First Americans may be over-ambitious, but it is not really misleading.

In the American wing of The Metropolitan Museum there is a colonial bedspread in which the motive is Columbia on her triumphal car, drawn by leopards and acclaimed by Indians, under the legend, Where Liberty Dwells There is My Country. In view of the fact that about twenty-four dollars was paid for Manhattan and that we should like occupancy to be guardianship, one hopes that civilization may yet be a right substitute for *primaeval ecstasica*.

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